

PEEL 2023–25

Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy

An inspection of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary

Contents

Overall summary	1
Our judgments	1
PEEL 2023–2025	2
Terminology in this report	2
HM Inspector’s summary	2
Leadership	4
Reducing crime assessment	5
Providing a service to victims of crime	6
Victim service assessment	6
Police powers and treating the public fairly and respectfully	8
Areas for improvement	8
Main findings	9
Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability	13
Area for improvement	13
Promising practice	14
Innovative practice	15
Main findings	16
Responding to the public	20
Areas for improvement	20
Innovative practice	21
Main findings	22
Investigating crime	25
Area for improvement	25
Main findings	27

Protecting vulnerable people	32
Area for improvement	32
Promising practice	33
Innovative practice	34
Main findings	34
Managing offenders and suspects	38
Area for improvement	38
Innovative practice	39
Main findings	39
Building, supporting and protecting the workforce	42
Innovative practice	42
Main findings	43
Leadership and force management	47
Areas for improvement	47
Main findings	49

Overall summary

Our judgments

Our inspection assessed how good Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is in nine areas of policing. We make graded judgments in eight of these nine as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Protecting vulnerable people	Police powers and public treatment		
	Developing a positive workplace	Preventing crime		
		Responding to the public		
		Investigating crime		
		Managing offenders		
		Leadership and force management		

We also inspected how effective a service Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary gives to [victims](#) of crime. We don't make a graded judgment for this area.

We set out our detailed findings about things the constabulary is doing well and where the constabulary should improve in the rest of this report.

We also assess the constabulary's performance in a range of other areas and we report on these separately. We make graded judgments for some of these areas.

Data in this report

For more information, please [view this report on our website](#) and select the 'About the data' section.

PEEL 2023–2025

In 2014, we introduced our police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections, which assess the performance of all 43 police forces in England and Wales. Since then, we have been continuously adapting our approach.

We have moved to a more [intelligence](#)-led, continual assessment approach, rather than the annual [PEEL inspections](#) we used in previous years. Forces are assessed against the characteristics of good performance, set out in the [PEEL Assessment Framework 2023–2025](#), and we more clearly link our judgments to [causes of concern](#) and [areas for improvement](#).

It isn't possible to make direct comparisons between the grades awarded in this PEEL inspection and those from the previous cycle of PEEL inspections. This is because we have increased our focus on making sure forces are achieving appropriate outcomes for the public, and in some cases we have changed the aspects of policing we inspect.

Terminology in this report

Our reports contain references to, among other things, 'national' definitions, priorities, policies, systems, responsibilities and processes.

In some instances, 'national' means applying to England or Wales, or England and Wales. In others, it means applying to England, Wales and Scotland, or the whole of the United Kingdom.

HM Inspector's summary

I am pleased with some aspects of the performance of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing victims with an effective service. I am satisfied with the other aspects of its performance.

I was pleased to find that the constabulary worked effectively with other organisations to keep [vulnerable people](#) who are victims safe and to tackle the behaviour of perpetrators. It demonstrates strong multi-agency [safeguarding](#) and information-sharing procedures. These procedures are enhanced through innovative digital processes that support identification of risk at the earliest opportunity.

Since [our last PEEL inspection](#), the constabulary has also taken steps to improve how it communicates with communities to identify problems and gather intelligence. As well as this, it is working effectively in partnership with a wide range of other organisations on problem-solving, crime prevention and early intervention.

The constabulary has worked hard to improve the quality of its investigations. It has effective governance arrangements for investigative standards and improved training for investigators. This results in thorough investigations where investigators look for opportunities to bring offenders to justice, even when victims are unwilling to proceed. But there is still more to do in achieving positive outcomes for victims.

The constabulary doesn't always answer emergency and non-emergency calls in a timely way. And it doesn't always attend calls for service as quickly as it should. But I was pleased to find that it was addressing these problems by increasing the number of call handlers and providing more ways for the public to make contact. The constabulary has seen notable improvements in call answering and attendance times, but it needs to do more to meet the public's needs.

The number of 999 and [101](#) calls that Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary receives is in line with other forces in England and Wales. Similarly, the constabulary's number of incidents is also in line with other forces. The constabulary has a normal level of funding per 1,000 population, albeit below the England and Wales average rate. It has one of the lowest [officer](#) per population ratios. But reassuringly, it effectively manages its funds to provide efficient police services.

The constabulary has moved to a new area model. This has had a positive effect on performance and resulted in better focus and control of [personnel](#) and assets at local level. But the change hasn't been without its challenges. Key operational areas of the constabulary, including response, neighbourhood and investigative policing, have at times been severely stretched. This is especially the case over summer when both counties see large numbers of visitors.

While personnel have at times experienced challenging workloads, I was pleased to find that the constabulary was effective at building, supporting and protecting its workforce. It provides comprehensive well-being support to officers and [staff](#) and is actively supporting those from under-represented groups to maximise retention. I was pleased to find that the constabulary was using positive action to give members of under-represented groups the confidence to become leaders.

I hope that changes to the way the constabulary operates help it to better meet the needs of the public and its workforce. I will be monitoring its progress closely.



Roy Wilsher

HM Inspector of Constabulary

Leadership

Using the [College of Policing leadership standards](#) as a framework, in this section we set out the most important findings relating to the constabulary's leadership at all levels.

Constabulary leaders have been effective and decisive in making changes quickly in key areas identified as requiring improvement. The decision-making process takes account of the constabulary's collaborative relationship with Thames Valley Police. The office of the [police and crime commissioner](#) also has good representation at all key police boards to make sure there is a joint approach to the key challenges.

The deputy chief constable holds regular performance management reviews with all senior commanders. The process aims to empower local leaders but also to make sure that they are focused on constabulary priorities. Their local business plans are expected to show that they have considered potential changes to policing beyond the next two years. The deputy chief constable also holds regular one-to-one meetings with district commanders to make sure they are working towards the constabulary's priorities at a more operational level.

The constabulary aims to make sure senior leaders have a collective focus. It holds six-monthly senior leaders' conferences for ranks of chief inspector and above and staff equivalent. These conferences place an emphasis on the important role that leadership plays in meeting the challenges the constabulary faces.

The constabulary has taken a targeted approach to communicating key messages to the workforce and to improving workforce productivity. Each week it sends a 'Five in Five' briefing to all supervisors. This consists of five key constabulary updates for supervisors to share with their teams in five minutes.

The constabulary plans to act on the [College of Policing's updated code of ethics](#) with a firm focus on public service, respect and accountability. Its flagship training in this area, 'Inclusion Matters', aims to equip leaders at all levels with the knowledge and confidence to promote inclusivity within the constabulary.

More detail on Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's leadership is included in the main body of the report.

Reducing crime assessment

The reducing crime assessment sets out what Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is doing to reduce crime and how effective this action is. This assessment doesn't include police-recorded crime figures. This is because they can be affected by variations and changes in recording policy and practice, making it difficult to draw comparisons over time.

The constabulary has adopted a geographical policing model with officers and staff more closely aligned with local communities. It has improved the investigative capability of its workforce with the aim of reducing crime and achieving better outcomes for victims.

Officers and staff understand their responsibility to safeguard vulnerable people and look for and record signs of vulnerability when they attend incidents. These include [children](#) exposed to [domestic abuse](#) and any signs that an occupier is being criminally exploited.

The constabulary is effective at tackling [antisocial behaviour](#) and violence, especially violence against women and girls. It works effectively with partners especially within the night-time economy. It uses prevention orders effectively to deter offending and has significantly reduced the number of recorded antisocial behaviour incidents.

The constabulary encourages problem-solving (identifying the root cause of crime and vulnerability), but in practice this doesn't take place consistently. As a result, personnel sometimes carry out prevention activity with limited analysis of the desired outcomes.

The constabulary needs to allow its [neighbourhood policing team](#) to carry out more of its core duties, including targeted patrols and work with local communities. Many neighbourhood officers are regularly removed from these duties to help other frontline officers meet demand. This can affect communities' trust and confidence in the police, especially among those groups that are [hard to reach](#).

The constabulary has highly effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and good working relationships with local authorities. The constabulary listens to victims, partner organisations and independent members of communities to improve its service and help prevent further crime. It intervenes effectively to reduce repeat victimisation and curtail offenders. It also prioritises action against offenders who pose the highest risk.

More detail on what Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is doing to reduce crime is included in the main body of the report.

Providing a service to victims of crime

Victim service assessment

This section describes our assessment of the service Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary provides to victims. This is from the point of reporting a crime and throughout the investigation. As part of this assessment, we reviewed 100 case files.

When the police close a case of a reported crime, they assign it an 'outcome type'. This describes the reason for closing it.

We selected 100 cases to review, including at least 20 that the constabulary had closed with the following outcome:

Where a [community resolution](#) was applied.

Although our victim service assessment is ungraded, it influences graded judgments in the other areas we have inspected.

The constabulary doesn't always identify repeat victims and victims who are vulnerable people

The constabulary has improved the time it takes to answer emergency calls. It has also reduced the number of non-emergency calls where the caller hangs up before a handler answers it. But the constabulary has more work to do to achieve [national guidelines](#).

In their calls, call handlers usually use a [structured process that assesses threat, harm, risk and vulnerability](#). But they don't always check to identify repeat victims or record the results, which means they aren't always fully aware of the victim's circumstances when considering what response the constabulary should give. Call handlers are polite and give victims advice on crime prevention and how to preserve evidence.

The constabulary doesn't always respond promptly to calls for service

On most occasions, the constabulary responds to calls for service appropriately. But sometimes it doesn't respond within its own set timescales. It doesn't always inform victims of delays, which means that victims' expectations aren't always met. This may cause victims to lose confidence and to disengage with the process.

The constabulary doesn't always carry out effective investigations

In most cases, the constabulary investigates crimes in a timely way, but it doesn't always complete relevant and proportionate lines of enquiry. The constabulary doesn't always supervise investigations well, but it does keep victims regularly updated. Victims are more likely to have confidence in a police investigation when they receive regular updates.

A thorough investigation increases the likelihood of perpetrators being identified and arrested, providing a positive result for the victim. In most cases, the constabulary took victim personal statements, which give victims the opportunity to describe how that crime has affected their lives.

When a victim withdraws support for an investigation, the constabulary considers progressing the case without the victim's support. This can be an important way of safeguarding the victim and preventing further offences from being committed. The constabulary always records whether it considers using orders designed to protect victims, such as a [Domestic Violence Protection Notice](#) or [Domestic Violence Protection Order \(DVPO\)](#).

The [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime \('the Victims' Code'\)](#) requires forces to carry out a needs assessment at an early stage to determine whether victims need additional support. The constabulary doesn't always carry out these assessments or record all requests for additional support.

The constabulary doesn't always assign the right outcome type to an investigation, but it does consider victims' wishes

The constabulary doesn't always close crimes with the appropriate outcome type. It doesn't always record a clear rationale for using a certain outcome, and this isn't always effectively supervised. It asks for the victim's views when deciding which outcome type to assign to a closed investigation. When appropriate, the constabulary isn't always able to provide an auditable record of the victim's wishes. The constabulary always informs the victim of what outcome code has been assigned to the investigation.

Police powers and treating the public fairly and respectfully

Adequate

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is adequate at using police powers and treating people fairly and respectfully.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary needs to improve officer awareness of reasonable grounds to make sure they are using stop and search powers fairly

During our inspection, we reviewed a sample of 244 [stop and search records](#) from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024. Based on this sample, we estimate that 81.1 percent (+/- 4.9 percentage points) of all stop and searches carried out by the constabulary during this period had reasonable grounds. This is broadly unchanged compared to the findings from our previous review of records from 1 January to 31 December 2021 where we found that 79.2 percent (+/- 6.2 percentage points) of all stop and searches carried out by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary had reasonable grounds. Of the records we reviewed for stop and searches on people who self-identify as from an ethnic minority background, 38 of 45 had reasonable grounds.

The constabulary has improved its training on reasonable grounds for stop and search but has more to do. Reasonable grounds feature as part of the stop and search module in the constabulary's operational leadership course. However, there is still a lack of [continuing professional development](#) at constable level. Annual mandated public and personal safety training includes stop and search role plays that add realism to the training. But this training doesn't sufficiently cover consideration of reasonable grounds prior to an encounter. The constabulary needs to consider how it can improve compliance rates in this sensitive area of policing.

The constabulary needs to increase the capacity of its public and personal safety training provision

At the time of our inspection, the constabulary had a backlog of [officers](#) who hadn't had their required 12 hours of public and personal safety training (PPST) within a 12-month period. This is a risk, as a lack of up-to-date training can lead to the poor application of PPST skills and result in injuries to both officers and those being restrained. It is notable that the constabulary has higher rates of injury to people subjected to use of force compared to the typical range for police forces in England and Wales. The constabulary hasn't sufficiently analysed its data to better understand if there is a correlation. It is also important that although officers may continue to be deployed after their PPST qualifications have expired, their ability to carry a Taser is immediately removed. This is because officers are only allowed to carry a Taser if they hold both the standard annual PPST accreditation within a 12-month period and the specialist Taser training accreditation. This, in turn, means that there are fewer officers available to provide a higher level of protection to police and the public in violent situations.

At the time of our inspection, the constabulary acknowledged that it did not have sufficient PPST [personnel](#), training places and gymnasium space to make sure that all operationally deployable officers had the required in-date PPST training. It told us that it was taking both immediate and longer-term steps in all three areas to improve the situation. These include recruiting more permanent [staff](#), establishing a cohort of support trainers from other areas of the constabulary to cover staff shortages and increasing the number of training days and size of classes. With these changes, the constabulary told us that it would have the capacity to train 1,384 officers between March and July 2025. However, the constabulary will also have 1,119 officers whose training will go out of date during this time, therefore only reducing the backlog by 265. Overall, by implementing the planned measures, the constabulary aims to have all operational officers fully trained by 31 December 2025. We will continue to monitor the constabulary's performance to make sure it improves in this area.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to police powers and treating people fairly and respectfully.

The workforce understands why and how it should treat the public with fairness and respect

Police officers and staff have a sound understanding of what constitutes unfair behaviour. The constabulary runs mandated 'Inclusion Matters' training with a strong focus on the [code of ethics](#), [unconscious bias](#) and treating people with dignity and respect. The constabulary's initial communication programme for student officers includes use of the LEAPS (listen, empathise, ask, paraphrase, summarise) de-escalation model and the [five-step appeal](#). The five-step appeal is a communication technique used by UK police officers to de-escalate situations and encourage compliance with requests, particularly in situations involving non-compliance or resistance.

The initial communication programme also provides new recruits with knowledge, skills and understanding of human interaction. Initial student officer training and annual personal safety training for all frontline officers aims to help them develop and maintain these skills through realistic scenario-based training.

Officers are confident in their use of stop and search and use it effectively and respectfully

The constabulary recorded an increase of 22.4 percent in the number of [stop and search](#) encounters in the year ending 31 March 2024 compared to the previous year. It told us that this figure has continued to increase. The constabulary has an above-average [linked find rate](#) for stop and searches. A linked find is when officers find a stolen or prohibited item that is linked to the reason for the search. In the year ending 31 March 2024, 30.7 percent of stop and searches carried out by the constabulary had linked finds. This is higher than the average outcome rate of 25.1 percent across all forces in England and Wales. As part of our inspection, we reviewed [body-worn video \(BWV\)](#) footage of ten stop and search encounters and found that officers' behaviour and use of powers was fair and effective. They treated the people they stopped with dignity and respect, often in challenging situations.

The constabulary needs to make sure that officers use BWV in all encounters

The constabulary has effective strategic oversight of stop and search via its three-monthly use of police powers board. The assistant chief constable chairs this with a representative from the strategic [independent advisory group \(IAG\)](#), youth IAG and office of the [police and crime commissioner \(PCC\)](#) in attendance. Locally, each district has its own IAG, which meets bi-monthly. Part of the agenda is to review and discuss at least two stop and search incidents and includes viewing the BWV footage. Findings are published on the constabulary's website with a district commander's narrative, which includes context around any identified [disproportionality](#). Observations are also collated and fed back to the use of powers board to promote improvements from identified good and poor practice.

There is also effective supervision of stop and search activity at an operational level. Sergeants review all stop and search forms. All sergeants and inspectors are also expected to review three stop and search forms a month in conjunction with the BWV to make sure that the grounds recorded match the footage. The results of these reviews are reported to the use of police powers board. From the beginning of the review process in February 2024 to January 2025, the constabulary told us that it reviewed 1,557 stop and search forms, with around 96 percent confirmed as having used BWV. However, the constabulary doesn't have analytical processes in place to help it identify the total use rates of BWV. This would help identify officers and teams who repeatedly fail to use it. Failing to use BWV while carrying out stop and search or using force may affect public trust and confidence. It can also have legal and evidential ramifications.

The constabulary understands how to use force fairly and appropriately but needs to improve its recording of use of force incidents

In the year ending 31 March 2024, the constabulary recorded 17,699 use of force incidents. This was a 27 percent increase in recording compared to the previous year. However, based on the number of arrests, we estimate that the constabulary still under-records use of force by about 10,126 incidents per year. It has taken steps to improve use of force recording by promoting it via constabulary-wide communications and including it in leadership training for sergeants and inspectors.

At the same time, there have been technical advancements, such as PRONTO. This is a digital product that allows officers to directly record and upload use of force forms to their mobile devices. They can then send an update to the constabulary's [Niche](#) records management system. The Niche system also generates a task for officers to complete a use of force form at the point of booking detainees into custody. The use of force lead also meets regularly with public and personal safety trainers to make sure there is consistent messaging at the point of training. This includes emphasis on compliant handcuffing, which is the type of force least likely to be recorded. As a result, the constabulary told us it has seen a significant increase in the completion of use of force forms.

The constabulary makes sure that there is effective internal and external oversight of use of force

The constabulary effectively monitors its use of force in a similar way to stop and search. It does this internally through its use of police powers board and externally via an independent scrutiny group. On a three-monthly basis as part of its review process, the external group examines ten BWV recordings of use of force. It randomly selects these and includes footage of Taser deployment. District IAGs also review use of force as part of their stop and search BWV review.

There is also effective internal scrutiny of recorded use of force incidents. Inspectors are allocated two use of force incidents at random per month to review. Of these samples, 50 percent involve footage of people from ethnic minority backgrounds to make sure there is additional scrutiny in this sensitive area. Inspectors decide whether the use of force was appropriate and correctly recorded. Findings from both the internal and external reviews are fed back to the use of police powers board, which may take action where appropriate. For example, some use of force incidents are referred to the [professional standards department](#). The board makes these referrals if it identifies potential [misconduct](#) issues. Conversely, the board can recommend incidents for formal recognition if exemplary conduct is evident. Some incidents are used at team debriefs to show good or bad practice, and inspectors may refer examples back to the PPST team to improve training. The constabulary told us that there were good levels of compliance with around 903 reviews completed since August 2024. This is a completion rate of around 84 percent among inspectors.

The constabulary needs to improve its external presentation of use of force data

The constabulary presents use of force data on its website using clear and impactful infographics. However, unlike stop and search data, there is no narrative to explain the findings. This is especially the case where its use has been disproportionate for people in certain ethnic minority groups.

Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability

Adequate

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is adequate at prevention and deterrence.

Area for improvement

To protect neighbourhood policing activity, the constabulary needs to reduce crime workloads of neighbourhood officers and the number diverted from their core duties

In [our 2021/22 PEEL inspection](#), the constabulary received an area for improvement relating to the high number of [officers](#) diverted from neighbourhood policing to support other teams. Many neighbourhood police officers were managing high crime workloads as well as supplementing [personnel](#) levels in response teams. It is reassuring that since then, with the office of the [police and crime commissioner](#)'s support, the constabulary has created 99 dedicated neighbourhood officer roles known as 'local bobbies'. These officers aren't diverted from their core duties to other teams and have a manageable investigative workload. They are assigned specific areas made up of one or more local wards. Their primary role is to tackle local issues, working closely with community safety partnerships to identify the best problem-solving approach. However, their ability to act has been reduced by a lack of support from the wider [neighbourhood policing team \(NPT\)](#). This support is essential to make sure that local policing objectives are achieved.

NPT officers outside the dedicated local bobbies continue to be diverted from their core duties to support response teams that are facing resilience challenges. This is especially common over the summer months due to the increased seasonal demand that affects Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. In addition, NPT officers have been managing high crime workloads, with some having over 20 active investigations. This further reduces their ability to support the local bobbies in their work in the community. This means that NPT officers are less visible to the public. And they can't dedicate as much time to solving local problems and working with the public.

The constabulary is addressing the problem. Fewer NPT officers are being diverted from their core duties to fill personnel shortages in response teams. This is occurring in line with an increase in newly trained officers joining response teams. This will continue until the start of summer 2025. At the time of our inspection, the constabulary had completed its summer resourcing plan for 2025. It will make sure that it spreads any requirement to support shortages in response teams over a wider range of units and not just the NPT. The constabulary is also reviewing its crime triage and allocation processes, which should see more crime allegations dealt with at the point of initial reporting. This will reduce the number of cases sent on to the NPT for further investigation. We will monitor the constabulary for improvement over the coming months.

Promising practice

The constabulary has achieved notable successes in tackling shoplifting

The constabulary has developed an effective and efficient problem-solving approach with retailers to tackle organised shoplifting. The process targets prolific offenders and involves the constabulary working with private security partners. The partners collate evidence packs of multiple offending by the same offender. This includes CCTV footage and witness statements from shop owners and employees. The constabulary told us that the operation had seen 47 people charged with 557 crimes. The total value of these theft offences was over £50,000. The constabulary estimates it has saved over £10,000 worth of policing hours by not having to collate this evidence itself. The constabulary applies [antisocial behaviour](#) legislation to these offenders to deter future offending. With its enhanced focus on shoplifting, the constabulary has seen a notable increase in the number of shoplifting offences reported. It sees this as a positive step, demonstrating that retailers feel more confident they will obtain an effective response. The constabulary is experiencing significant increases in positive judicial outcomes. This is a testament to its approach.

Innovative practice

The constabulary aims to better support those in crisis

The constabulary is establishing a trauma-informed approach to policing within its operational teams. This is to improve interaction with individuals who may respond negatively to any contact with the police, especially those who have had [adverse childhood experiences](#). The aim is to gain trust in the police from individuals in challenging circumstances. It includes obtaining their consent for onward referral to support agencies. The constabulary focuses on understanding why the person is responding negatively to the interaction, rather than simply reacting to their behaviour.

Working with the office of the [police and crime commissioner](#), the constabulary has implemented a pilot scheme. This involves trained trauma-informed practitioners from a private organisation patrolling with [officers](#). They observe more challenging aspects of police interactions with the public, such as individuals being taken into custody or being subject to [stop and search](#). The practitioners promote the use of reflective practice and produce depersonalised case studies to enhance learning. They also provide training sessions for police officers and [staff](#). These sessions aim to improve knowledge and understanding of adverse childhood experiences and trauma-informed practices. The constabulary hopes that this will lead to a reduction in injuries to both officers and individuals, as officers improve their knowledge of the heightened state of anxiety that people that can find themselves in. This, in turn, will help them to better manage confrontational situations.

The constabulary uses specialist volunteers effectively to improve operational performance and save money

Humane animal dispatchers (HAD) are trained volunteers. They support the constabulary in humanely ending the lives of seriously injured non-domestic animals, primarily deer involved in vehicle collisions. Dispatchers attend a call from the police within seven miles of their location to make sure they can arrive at the scene quickly and minimise any discomfort to the animal. Using HAD volunteers prevents the use a police [armed response vehicle](#), whose [officers](#) aren't as expertly trained or equipped in this specialist function. Equally, such activity takes them away from their core duties. The constabulary told us that in 2023, HAD volunteers responded to 453 incidents, and in 2024 there was around a 50 percent increase in their use. The constabulary estimates it will save around £100,000 by working with these specialist volunteers, as well as reduce the unnecessary suffering of animals. Several other police forces are looking at Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's process for their own force areas.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to prevention and deterrence.

The constabulary needs to improve how it uses and stores its problem-solving plans and shares good practice

Operational units within Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary are using a range of different processes to store and operate their problem-solving plans. This has led to an inconsistent approach and often a lack of proper analysis of the problem and desired outcome. To improve uniformity, the constabulary has created a problem-solving hub on the intranet, which includes a range of practical information. It has created a problem-solving template with an online tool. This tool navigates officers through creating a plan and has sections and links to support the various stages of the process. A senior officer (inspector or above) must be responsible for all plans, and the constabulary recommends that there should be only one plan per district. Some districts now have plans in place. We reviewed several of these plans and found that they were of a good standard.

The problem-solving hub also contains a good practice library, which includes exemplary plans for officers to refer to. However, we found that usable content was limited, with many of the entries being closer to operational initiatives than problem-solving plans. The result is that the constabulary struggles to consistently identify and record best practice.

Officers have received only limited training to support this new process. Some online training on problem-solving is available, and there is also a small cohort of specialist officers and staff available to advise on problem-solving activity.

The constabulary has created a comprehensive neighbourhood policing excellence course designed to upskill NPT personnel in both practical and procedural activities that support their roles. However, the constabulary hasn't yet implemented this training. Instead, it has prioritised training to develop officers and staff in investigating crime, in line with its new operating model.

The constabulary prioritises the prevention and deterrence of crime and antisocial behaviour

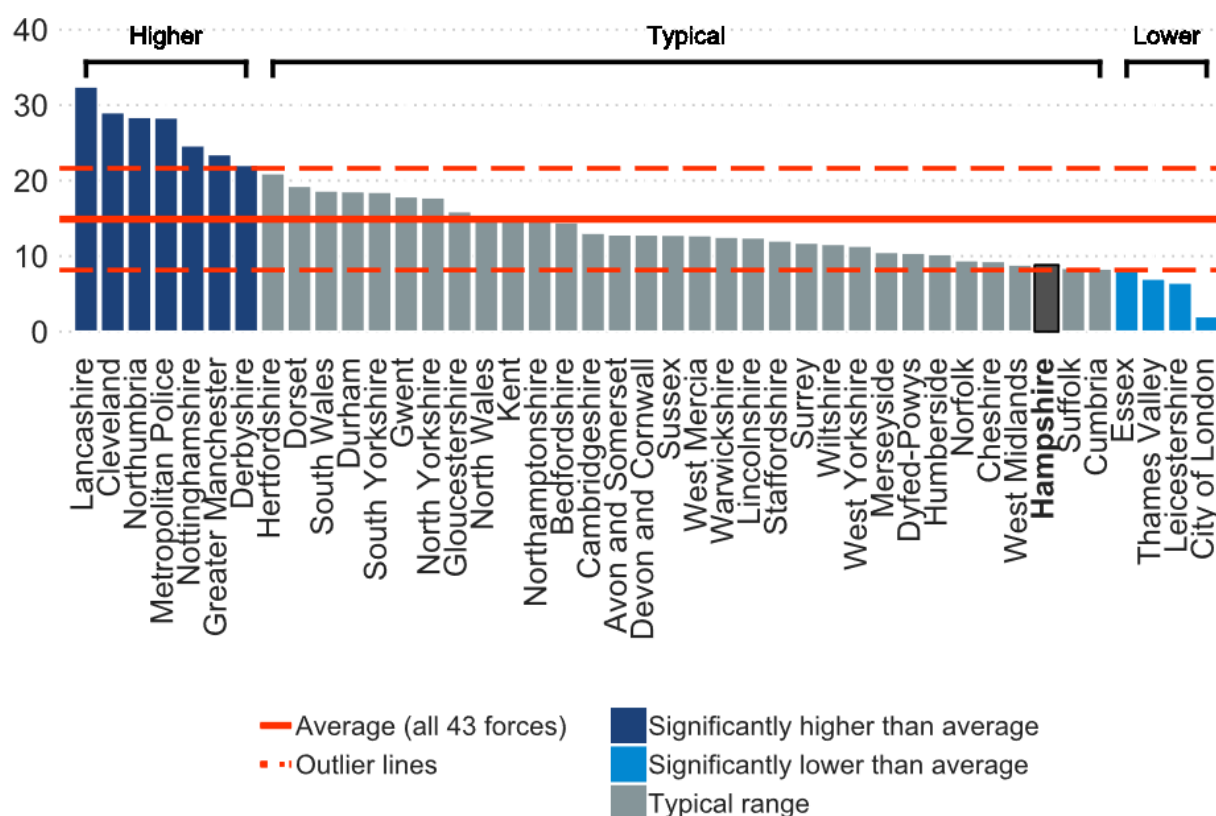
The constabulary is effective at tackling antisocial behaviour and violence, especially violence against women and girls. It works with partners within the night-time economy to tackle those individuals who exhibit predatory behaviour. It is also employing initiatives to protect people who may be at risk through the consumption of excess alcohol. The constabulary aims to find longer-term solutions to problems where it can.

Operation Nautical is the constabulary's annual partnership approach to antisocial behaviour and serious violence in the city of Portsmouth over the summer months. Activities include an increase in high-visibility police and partnership patrols, including the use of outreach workers to protect people who are vulnerable. Other measures include the use of drones and dispersal notices and the securing of [Criminal Behaviour Orders](#) for prolific perpetrators. The creation of a partnership working group with commercial outlets aims to target harden retail establishments to prevent offending. Target hardening means taking measures to strengthen the security of a property in order to deter or prevent crime. The constabulary told us that in 2024, it saw a 26 percent reduction in serious violent crime in Portsmouth over the summer months compared to the previous year.

The constabulary is effective at using prevention orders. In the year ending 31 March 2024, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary issued 919 antisocial behaviour orders linked to 17,977 reported antisocial behaviour incidents. This suggests that antisocial behaviour orders were used in approximately 5.1 percent of incidents (1 order issued to every 20 recorded incidents). This was higher than the typical range for forces across England and Wales, where the average across all forces was 1.4 percent.

The constabulary has also increased its use of Community Protection Notices, Criminal Behaviour Orders and civil injunctions substantially compared to the year ending 31 March 2022. In the year ending 31 March 2024, the constabulary issued more than 8 times as many Community Protection Notices (131 compared to 15), more than 3 times as many Criminal Behaviour Orders (83 compared to 25) and more than 5 times as many civil injunctions (26 compared to 5) as it did in the year ending 31 March 2022. At the same time, in the year ending 31 March 2024, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary recorded 8.8 antisocial behaviour incidents per 1,000 population. This is lower than the average of 14.9 antisocial behaviour incidents per 1,000 population across all forces in England and Wales and is a low value within the typical range.

Figure 1: Recorded antisocial behaviour incidents per 1,000 population by forces in England and Wales in the year ending 31 March 2024



Source: [Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2024](#) from the Office for National Statistics

The constabulary works effectively with its local communities

The constabulary has improved how it listens to community priorities and sentiment for all its communities. It uses a two-way, online community messaging platform called [Hampshire Alert](#). This allows geographically focused messaging to groups or households about issues in their area. Using census, local authority and other data, the platform is also able to identify and map people from ethnic minority communities, which helps the constabulary to better support its work with them. At the time of our inspection, the constabulary told us that over 50,000 people had registered, which is around 6 percent of total households.

In March 2024, the constabulary went live with a new communication tool called [Let's Talk](#). This is a community survey initiative that aims to help people share local concerns with the constabulary. The survey has been promoted in several different ways. These include online by encouraging members of Hampshire Alert to complete the survey and via social media. The constabulary also encourages the public to complete the survey during days of actions when it targets specific streets or areas. Officers and police community support officers have access to the survey on their constabulary-issued mobile phones. This allows key information to be collected immediately, including people's ethnic background and language spoken, to better support future work with communities.

Let's Talk has proved to be especially effective when used in conjunction with multi-agency problem-solving activity. [Clear, Hold, Build](#) is an innovative framework, developed by the Home Office. It aims to help police forces reclaim and rebuild neighbourhoods affected by organised crime, make areas safer and increase public confidence. Having implemented a Clear, Hold, Build operation in Gosport, the constabulary regularly surveys residents before and after activities. This is to gain their opinions on local problems and to understand what improvements, if any, the interventions have made.

The constabulary is innovative in analysing responses. It told us that it was the only force in the country that sends a secondary survey to those who responded to a feedback survey with very good or good or very poor or poor. The aim is to better understand their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the police. Explanations for negative ratings have included lack of visibility and inability to contact police. This approach is helping the constabulary to assess ways of improving its performance. It told us that as at 19 February 2025, 29,680 surveys had been completed.

Responding to the public

Adequate

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is adequate at responding to the public.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary needs to attend calls for service in line with its internal targets and update the caller if there are delays in attendance

The constabulary doesn't publish attendance targets, but it has an internal target of 15 minutes to respond to emergency calls. During our inspection, we found that it wasn't always attending calls for service quickly enough. We found that it attended 40 of the 63 cases we reviewed within its attendance time frame. This means it may be missing opportunities to keep communities safe.

We also found that the constabulary wasn't always updating callers if there were delays in attendance. It updated callers if there was a delay in only 15 of the 27 cases we reviewed. Updating callers is particularly important as the constabulary isn't getting to incidents as quickly as it would like. The constabulary should have the right levels of oversight to improve how it responds to incidents. If it doesn't understand how good it is at answering calls and responding to incidents, it will find it more difficult to improve the service it provides.

The constabulary needs to make sure there is effective supervision of deployment decisions, especially in its use of video technology

The constabulary gives [victims](#) the option to report some crime types via video technology. It has moved away from using this as an immediate deployment option (rapid video response) to offering it as a scheduled appointment. We found examples of scheduled video appointments being offered in cases that weren't appropriate, including high-risk [domestic abuse](#) cases and allegations where [children](#) were either present or victims. Many of these cases lacked any supervision to assess the deployment decision, including when the call grading had changed from the initial point of contact. The constabulary uses the structured [THRIVE](#) model to assess risk and check for victim [vulnerabilities](#), but it should make sure that there is appropriate oversight of this information to inform deployment decisions.

Since receiving our feedback, the constabulary has introduced greater supervisory oversight of the use of video technology. We will continue to monitor the effect of these changes.

Innovative practice

The constabulary has improved its level of contact with victims of crime

The constabulary has created an online [victims'](#) portal to better support victims of crime. It consists of a self-service portal that allows victims to log in and access information about their case and rights as a victim. They can also request contact from the [officer](#) in the case. The constabulary told us that the victims' portal had been very successful and achieved a 14 percent higher satisfaction rate for victims than in cases where the portal wasn't used.

Since going live in March 2024, the constabulary told us that around 10,000 people had signed up to the portal and around 40,000 messages had been sent. This, in turn, has reduced demand on the constabulary's [101](#) non-emergency number, which is often used by victims of crime who are asking for updates. The constabulary has integrated this process with its crime recording system so that messages from victims appear directly on a crime investigation report. It is used for a range of crime types but not crimes linked to [domestic abuse](#) or sexual offending as these often require a more enhanced level of victim support. The constabulary told us that it was aiming to extend this process to these crime types and was working with a group of forces to share development costs.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary responds to the public.

The constabulary scrutinises performance effectively in contact management

The constabulary has good oversight and scrutiny of call handling and incident management to inform plans for improvement. It has set up the quality assurance and development team to provide continual audit and inspection. This team also audits the quality of supervisory reviews and re-assessments of risk. It looks at five reviews a month for each supervisor and provides immediate feedback to individuals. Audit results are also subject to scrutiny during a monthly senior leadership team performance meeting.

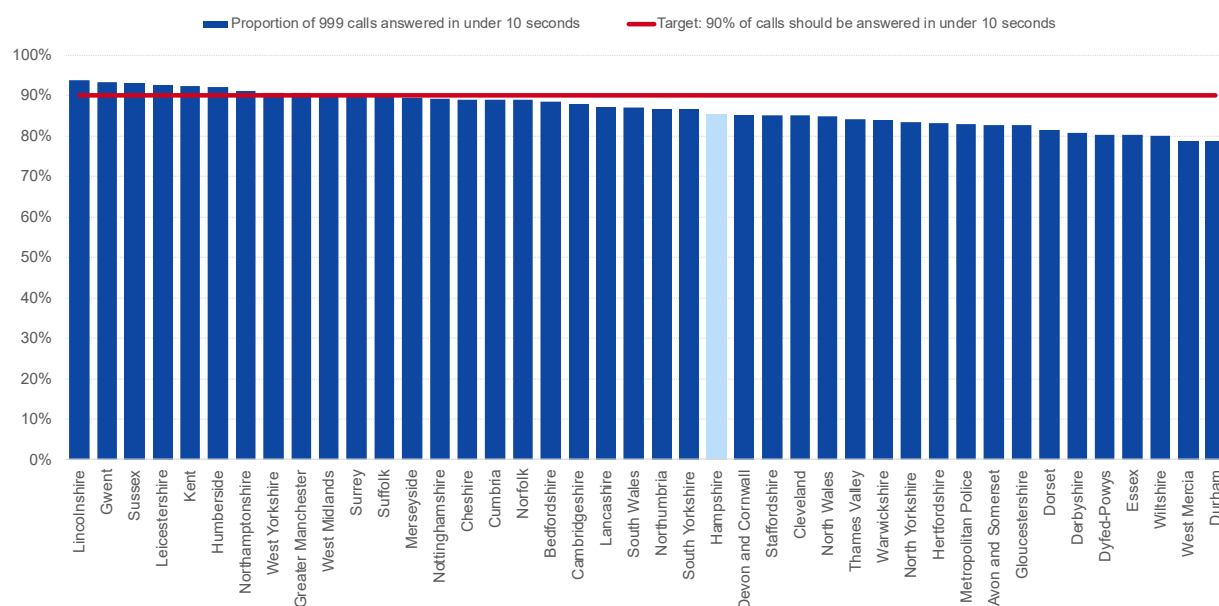
In January 2024, the contact management command introduced its first internal publication called 'Your Call'. It features anonymised case studies where there have been learning opportunities for officers and staff. This provides an opportunity to upskill officers and staff, learn from mistakes and improve the constabulary's service to the public.

The constabulary doesn't always answer emergency calls quickly enough but is making sustainable improvements to address this

The constabulary doesn't always answer calls quickly enough. In the year ending 31 December 2024, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary answered 86.3 percent of 999 calls within 10 seconds. This was below the standard expected of forces in England and Wales of answering 90 percent of 999 calls within 10 seconds. If forces don't answer calls quickly enough, it can mean losing both public confidence and investigative opportunities to keep communities safe.

Despite being below the required standard, the constabulary has made significant sustainable improvements to performance in this area since our last inspection in 2021/22. It has expanded its capacity to answer calls for service by opening a second contact management centre. This has also supported its ability to attract staff from a wider geographical area. Along with enhanced recruitment processes, this means that at the time of our inspection, the constabulary was at full staffing levels for contact management. Performance was increasing as a result. The constabulary told us that in January 2025, 95.5 percent of 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds, which is above the required standard and up from 92.7 percent in the preceding month.

Figure 2: Proportion of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds by forces in England and Wales in the year ending 31 December 2024



Source: [999 performance data](#) from BT

Note: Call answering time is the time taken for a call to be transferred from BT to a force and then answered by that force.

The constabulary needs to reduce the number of non-emergency calls that callers abandon before a handler answers

For the year ending 28 February 2025, the constabulary told us that callers abandoned 10.7 percent of calls to its 101 non-emergency line. As set out in the 2020 national contact management strategy principles and guidance, forces with a switchboard should aim to have an abandonment rate lower than 5 percent. While Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary only operates its switchboard during its peak demand periods of 8am and 10pm seven days a week, this is sufficient for it to be assessed in the category of forces having a switchboard.

During our inspection, we found that the constabulary had improved its understanding of the number of abandoned calls. It had also improved its awareness of whether callers then attempted to contact the police in a different way and what alternative method they used. It has achieved this understanding through better analysis of its data. Early evidence suggests that most people who abandoned calls weren't reverting to online reporting services. Now that the number of abandoned calls has reduced, the constabulary is planning to contact those who abandoned their calls, subject to an initial [risk assessment](#), to make sure it ultimately provides a service to all callers.

The constabulary assesses the level of risk and response required to calls for service but needs to make sure that repeat callers are routinely identified

All contact management personnel in the contact management centre are trained in applying the structured [THRIVE](#) model to assess the needs of a caller. We found that they used this approach in 66 of the 70 applicable cases we reviewed. In all 66 of these cases, the risk assessment was an accurate reflection of the circumstances of the call.

We found evidence that call handlers checked whether the victim or anyone else involved was a vulnerable person in 67 of the 74 relevant cases we reviewed. Where a call handler identified a vulnerable person, they recorded this in 42 of 43 cases. But we have concerns that call handlers don't always complete checks to find out if callers are repeat victims. We found evidence of checks for repeat victimisation in only 58 of the 72 relevant cases we reviewed. Failing to assess whether a victim has been victimised before can lead to a level of police response that is insufficient for their needs.

Officers provide an effective service to victims when attending incidents and have a good awareness of vulnerability

Response officers report that they can carry out their enquiries at the scene without undue pressure from the constabulary's control room to move on to the next call. Response supervisors support them in this and will challenge control room decisions if they feel their officers still have outstanding enquiries for a call before a new deployment. Officers generally have a good knowledge of crime scene or [golden hour principles](#). They make sure evidence is gathered and properly recorded and preserved.

Officers are clear on their responsibilities to safeguard vulnerable people. They look for and record signs of vulnerability when they attend incidents. These include children exposed to domestic abuse and any signs that an occupier is being criminally exploited. Officers responding to people in mental health crisis also have access to advice and guidance from specialist practitioners through a dedicated helpline. This often reduces the need to use police powers under [section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983](#) to detain people for their own safety.

Investigating crime

Adequate

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is adequate at investigating crime.

Area for improvement

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary doesn't consistently achieve appropriate outcomes for victims

The constabulary doesn't always achieve acceptable outcomes for [victims](#) of crime. The number of crimes it solves following investigations is low. It needs to understand the issue and work to achieve better outcomes for victims.

In the year ending 30 June 2024, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary recorded 130,733 victim-based crimes. Of these recorded offences, 12.5 percent were assigned an 'offences brought to justice' outcome. While low, this was within the normal range compared to other police forces in England and Wales.

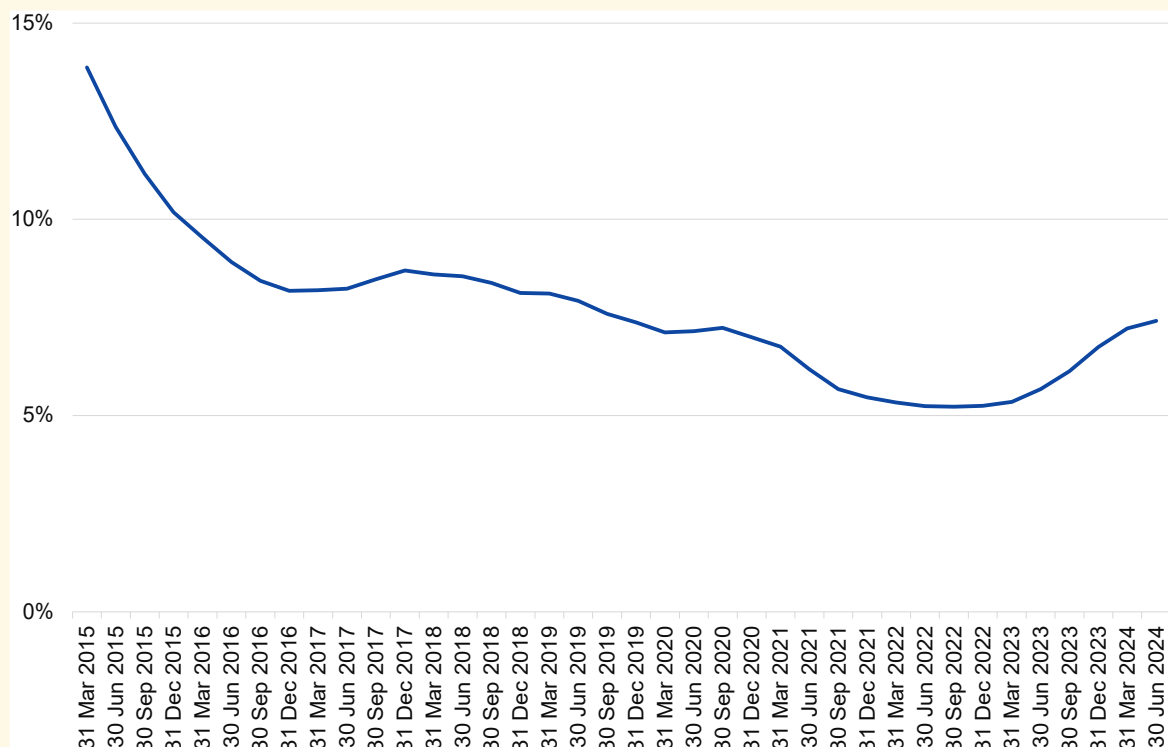
Figure 3: Percentage of victim-based crime recorded by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary and all forces in England and Wales, by selected outcome types, in the year ending 30 June 2024

Outcome types	Force outcome rate	England and Wales outcome rate
1 – Charged/summonsed	7.4%	6.3%
2 & 3 – Caution – youths & adults	1.0%	0.7%
8 – Community resolutions	3.7%	1.7%
9 – Prosecution not in the public interest (Crown Prosecution Service decision)	0.1%	0.0%
10 & 21 – Prosecution not in the public interest (police decision)	1.0%	0.8%
14 – Evidential difficulties (suspect not identified; victim declines or is unable to support)	3.1%	5.8%
15 – Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports police action)	17.4%	13.1%
16 – Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim doesn't support or withdraws support)	20.9%	21.3%
17 – Prosecution time limit expired	0.5%	0.3%
18 – Investigation complete – no suspect identified	39.0%	43.3%
20 – Action undertaken by another body/agency	1.5%	1.5%
22 – Diversionary, educational or intervention activity	0.3%	0.4%

Source: [Police recorded crime and outcomes open data](#) tables from the Home Office

Note: Presented data is from the October 2024 data release and may have been revised since. British Transport Police and City of London data is excluded from the England and Wales rate. Total police-recorded crime includes all crime (except fraud). For a full commentary and explanation of crime and outcome types, please see the [Home Office statistics](#).

Figure 4: Proportion of victim-based crimes assigned a 'charged/summonsed' outcome (outcome 1) by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary between the year ending 31 March 2015 and the year ending 30 June 2024



Source: [Police recorded crime and outcomes open data](#) tables from the Home Office

Note: Presented data is from the October 2024 data release and may have been revised since. [Victim](#)-based crimes are defined as all police-recorded crimes where there is a direct victim, such as an individual, an organisation or a corporate body.

When considering positive outcomes for victims, the number of offenders prosecuted can get lost. Across England and Wales, the number of offenders charged with offences has been decreasing for a notable period. The percentage of cases where Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary achieves a good outcome for the victim remains unacceptably low. The constabulary must strive to improve this and maintain its focus on bringing offenders to justice.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary investigates crime.

The constabulary has responded effectively to significant shortages of qualified detectives to help it to maintain its investigative standards

The constabulary has faced challenges in its recruitment and retention of police officers and staff within its investigative units. It concedes that support systems put in place failed to properly function for some trainees. This led to a lack of supervision and unmanageable workloads. High workloads, personnel shortages and high sickness rates within investigative units also discouraged uniformed officers from moving to detective posts.

The constabulary established a [gold group](#) in April 2024 chaired at assistant chief constable level. The group focused on different aspects of the constabulary's detective recruitment and retention. This has led to an increase in qualified detectives transferring from other forces, the payment of a bonus and the reallocation of some types of investigation. These changes have evened out demand while maintaining investigative standards.

The constabulary has also introduced a new internal detective pathway. This offers a supportive and graduated entry into the detective role, with improved professional development via the constabulary's newly founded crime academy. It has also altered its direct-entry detective programme to one intake a year. It has removed mixed uniform and detective intakes and instead concentrates on better supporting and developing new trainee detectives. In March 2024, the constabulary had filled 455 accredited [professionalising investigations programme](#) level 2 posts, which was a shortfall of 147 against the required number of 602. But the constabulary told us that in January 2025, it reached its required establishment of accredited officers and staff. This was the first time it had achieved this since it began tracking detective numbers via the gold group.

The constabulary has improved the investigative capability of its workforce

The constabulary has set up a crime knowledge hub to better support initial investigations in line with its aim to make sure all officers are effective investigators. The hub went live in June 2024 and includes information on different types of investigations and investigative skills. Those working on the hub continually ask for feedback from frontline officers to make sure that new inclusions are required operationally. Investigative pages on the hub aim to provide accurate legislative advice as well as practical support, including best practice examples of a statement for each different crime type. The skills pages cover fundamental components of an investigation, such as house-to-house enquiries, forensic considerations, powers of entry and interviewing suspects. The constabulary told us that officers were using the hub effectively. It told us that around 25 percent of use had been on mobile devices, which indicates that officers are asking for advice from the hub while operationally deployed.

The constabulary makes sure investigation plans are effective and include supervisory oversight

In moving to a new operating model, the constabulary has extended the number of officers who carry out crime investigations. It has provided a two-day investigations skills programme to improve the capability of frontline officers to investigate crime. As part of our victim service assessment, we found that in most cases, the constabulary investigated crimes in a timely way but didn't always complete relevant and proportionate lines of enquiry.

In 53 of the 64 cases we reviewed, we found evidence of an appropriate investigation plan in line with the College of Policing's [authorised professional practice](#) guidance. And in 72 of 88 cases we examined, we found that personnel took all appropriate and proportionate investigative opportunities from the reporting of a crime and throughout the investigation. We found evidence of effective supervision in 64 of 74 cases. A thorough, well supervised investigation increases the likelihood of perpetrators being identified and brought to justice, providing a positive result for the victim.

The constabulary is expediting opportunities to obtain evidence from mobile phones but needs to do the same for other devices

The constabulary has significantly reduced delays in the examination of phones submitted to its [digital forensic](#) unit. At the time of our inspection, the constabulary told us that the average time for allocation of a phone to a digital examiner was 31 days. Previously the backlog had reached up to 14 months. The constabulary has used outsourcing to reduce backlogs, but this support is being reduced as recruitment and retention of staff has improved. Of the seven cases we examined as part of our victim service assessment, we found that there were no unjustified delays in the investigation owing to digital forensics or digital examinations.

However, the constabulary is still experiencing increasing delays in the allocation of laptops and personal computers for examination. It has highlighted this as a central constabulary risk. The constabulary told us that in June 2024, the average number of days taken to allocate a laptop or computer to an examiner was 60, but in December 2024, it was 121. The constabulary does prioritise cases assessed as high risk, but the delays could still lead to missed opportunities to safeguard victims and prosecute offenders. This is especially the case where computers are subsequently found to contain images of child abuse that have originated from that device.

The constabulary keeps victims regularly updated and maximises opportunities to achieve justice on their behalf but doesn't always fully consider their needs

In 81 of the 95 cases we reviewed as part of our victim service assessment, we found that the constabulary had provided a good level of victim service. These cases were in line with the Victims' Code, with victims being regularly updated. To increase emphasis on the need to regularly update victims, the constabulary has introduced a weekly, dedicated victims' hour for all investigative departments where the sole focus should be on contacting victims.

In most cases we reviewed, we found that the constabulary took victim personal statements when required, which gave victims the opportunity to describe how that crime had affected their lives. The Victims' Code also requires forces to carry out a needs assessment at an early stage to determine whether victims need additional support. However, the constabulary doesn't always carry out these assessments or record all requests for additional support. Appropriate victims' needs assessments were clearly recorded in only 61 of the 75 relevant cases we reviewed.

When a victim doesn't co-operate with police or withdraws their support, the constabulary is effective in considering whether it should continue with the investigation. This is called evidence-led prosecution. It is particularly relevant when considering cases of domestic abuse where the victim may be under pressure not to proceed. All frontline officers have received [Domestic Abuse Matters training](#) to better understand the victim's perspective. The training is provided by [SafeLives](#), a charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse. The constabulary has also carried out a series of reviews of [dip-sampled](#) cases where it has worked closely with the Crown Prosecution Service to improve opportunities for conviction. We found evidence that investigators considered progressing or tried to progress cases without the support of victims in 15 of the 16 relevant cases we reviewed.

The constabulary doesn't always assign the right outcome type to an investigation, but it does consider victims' wishes

The constabulary doesn't always close crimes with the appropriate outcome type. We found that it closed 71 of the 88 cases we reviewed with the correct code. It doesn't always record a clear rationale for using a certain outcome, and this isn't always effectively supervised. However, the constabulary does ask for the victim's views when deciding which outcome type to assign to a closed investigation. It also informs the victim of what outcome code has been assigned to the investigation.

The constabulary needs to improve how it records why victims withdraw their support for investigations

When a suspect has been identified but there are evidential difficulties and the victim doesn't support or withdraws their support for police action, an auditable record from the victim should be held confirming their decision. This could include a BWV recording, an email or a signed pocketbook entry or statement. If the victim refuses to provide an auditable record, or to ask them to do so may cause further trauma, we expect to see recorded rationale. This should include records of attempted contact with dates, times and methods used or copies of emails sent with no reply. It is insufficient to simply make an entry that unsuccessful attempts have been made to contact the victim. The constabulary has been advised that this is the level of audit required, yet it continues to underperform in this area. An auditable record of the victim's wishes was present in only 7 of the 24 cases we reviewed. This represents a risk that victims' wishes may not be fully represented and considered before an investigation is closed.

Protecting vulnerable people

Good

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is good at protecting vulnerable people.

Area for improvement

The constabulary should improve its governance of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme to make sure disclosure outcomes are accurately recorded on its systems

The [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#), also known as Clare's Law, allows the police to disclose information to a [victim](#) or potential victim of [domestic abuse](#) about their partner's or ex-partner's previous abusive or violent offending. The scheme has two elements: 'Right to ask' allows an individual or relevant third party (for example, a family member) to ask the police to check whether the person in question has a violent or abusive past; 'Right to know' allows the police to make a disclosure on their own initiative if they possess information about the violent or abusive behaviour of a person that may affect the safety of that person's current or ex-partner.

We found that the constabulary made effective decisions on when to disclose information and contacted those at risk in a timely manner. However, its recording processes are poor, with the existence of duplicate entries and some records that aren't being shown as complete. This means that the constabulary's data is inaccurate, so it doesn't know how many disclosures it has made or when. This may affect future disclosure decisions but also means the constabulary can't assess the effectiveness of the scheme.

The constabulary is aware of the recording issues and is taking immediate steps to improve both data quality and [officer](#) compliance in completing records. We will monitor for improvement over the coming months.

Promising practice

The constabulary has effective processes in place to support victims of domestic abuse where the perpetrator is a police officer or police staff member

The constabulary appoints senior oversight [officers](#) at chief inspector rank. These officers act as an independent point of contact to support [victims](#) and to make sure cases progress effectively. They scrutinise cases and look for issues that may undermine the victim's confidence in the process. The constabulary has also established monthly scrutiny panels, made up of police and partner agencies including [independent domestic violence advocate](#) organisations. These panels review [domestic abuse](#) cases where a police officer or member of [staff](#) is either the perpetrator or the victim. The panel gives direction for cases and identifies individual and organisational good practice and learning.

The creation of the senior oversight officer role and scrutiny panels has also led to a change in the investigation model. Previously, criminal elements to cases were investigated by district criminal investigation department teams, while the [misconduct](#) element sat within the [professional standards department](#). This often led to a disconnect between the two. The constabulary has now set up a dedicated police-perpetrated domestic abuse investigation team within the professional standards department. This investigates both criminal and misconduct cases together.

Since the introduction of these new processes in June 2021, the constabulary has seen a rise in the number of reported cases. There have also been more reports of perpetrators above police constable or police staff equivalent rank. Both of these developments suggest an increasing confidence in victims to report. There has also been strong public support from partners.

The constabulary is using automated processes to reduce demand within its multi-agency safeguarding hub

On a daily basis, the constabulary receives requests from children's services to provide information on [children](#) who have come to police notice, ahead of planned case conferences. An automated system now supports this process by reviewing police databases and generating a bespoke information report in the required format. A member of the [multi-agency safeguarding hub](#) team checks the report for accuracy, adds anything missed and completes a final [risk assessment](#) before sending the report on to children's services. The constabulary told us that this new process was saving a significant amount of time as well as making sure that it provides a uniform and rapid response.

Innovative practice

The constabulary is innovative in the safeguarding training it provides to both staff and partners working in multi-agency safeguarding

The constabulary has provided comprehensive and effective training for [officers](#) and [staff](#) working within its [multi-agency safeguarding hub](#) across a range of different subjects including [risk assessment](#) and information management. The training is a mixture of learning and classroom activity. The [College of Policing](#) has assessed it as best practice and is using it to improve its own [authorised professional practices](#). The constabulary told us that five pilot forces had volunteered to use the training packages, which the College of Policing will evaluate after six months.

The constabulary also supports partner agencies, such as local authorities, to improve their knowledge of information disclosure to [safeguard vulnerable people](#). It has developed an online training package that focuses on early identification of risk and the need to be proactive when deciding whether to disclose information. The training is scenario-based and tests practical application of the law. At the time of our inspection, it had been provided to over 1,000 professionals and been instrumental in changing attitudes and approaches to disclosure. The constabulary told us the College of Policing had also rated the online training package as best practice and that other forces were using it. The feedback from partner agencies has also been very positive.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary protects vulnerable people.

The constabulary understands the nature and scale of vulnerability

The constabulary has remodelled its governance and oversight of vulnerability. It has set up a specialist crime and public protection command that brings together all aspects of child protection alongside the dedicated multi-agency safeguarding hub teams under a single department head. This helps the constabulary to better oversee and co-ordinate with partners its approach to child abuse, exploitation and safeguarding. The command has also aligned specialist investigative resources with certain areas to achieve better co-ordination of public protection activity and the management of dangerous offenders. The areas that the command has assigned these resources to are major crime, rape and serious sexual offences and the [management of sexual offenders and violent offenders \(MOSOVO\)](#).

The constabulary has designed its vulnerability strategy to provide the best possible service to the most vulnerable people and communities. It has set up a performance framework and governance structure aligned with the [College of Policing's 14 identified strands of vulnerability](#). A strategic lead oversees each of the strands and reports regularly to the monthly constabulary performance group chaired by the deputy chief constable. Each lead also chairs their own board where the focus is on achieving positive outcomes for victims. For example, for domestic abuse, the constabulary's 'DA in a Day' directive aims to maximise opportunities to charge and remand offenders at the earliest opportunity following arrest.

The constabulary requests feedback from victims on a regular basis and uses it to enhance and improve its services to protect vulnerable people

The constabulary has good measures in place for obtaining feedback from victims who are vulnerable people using a range of surveys. For domestic abuse cases, the constabulary has also set up [Authentic Voice](#), a local authority commissioned project in conjunction with SafeLives. This project aims to make sure domestic abuse survivors are at the heart of tackling domestic abuse by providing them with a safe space to share lived experiences. This was originally piloted on the Isle of Wight but is now constabulary wide. It invites victims to attend an online meeting, supported by [independent domestic violence advocates](#), to provide feedback on their experience as victims. The aim is to gather both good and poor practice. At the time of our inspection, there had been several meetings with around three to five victims in each meeting.

The constabulary has improved its use of DVPOs but needs to increase its use of Stalking Protection Orders

Investigators are now considering DVPOs as well as the use of police [bail](#). Previously they were only considering one or the other. The constabulary told us that as at May 2024, the number of DVPOs applied for had increased to around 35 per month. It had previously been as low as eight per month.

The constabulary has also improved its process for obtaining and managing [Stalking Protection Orders \(SPOs\)](#) in recognition that existing numbers are too low. It has increased officer awareness of their use and simplified the application process. Two newly employed protective orders co-ordinators support this process. They review all stalking offences to maximise opportunities to apply for orders. The constabulary runs a monthly stalking clinic at which it considers cases for further intervention opportunities including SPOs. Once an SPO is obtained, a named offender manager from the MOSOVO teams manages compliance and an effective response to breaches. As part of our victim service assessment, we found that the constabulary considered ancillary orders, such as Domestic Violence Protection Notices, DVPOs and SPOs, in eight of the eight relevant cases we reviewed.

The constabulary is effective in its risk assessment of vulnerability

The quality of initial referral forms for vulnerability is of a good standard. Officers complete a [public protection notice \(PPN\)](#) for each vulnerable person coming to their notice, whether they are a child, vulnerable adult or victim of domestic abuse. The constabulary has added an additional field for observations to make sure that officers provide a contextual account of what has occurred. This helps to inform the scoring. The constabulary has low levels of secondary regrading of PPNs. This indicates the officers completing the initial risk assessments have a good knowledge of risk.

The constabulary has several frontline officers who are child-centred policing champions. These officers receive extra training and act as a single point of contact. They help inform officers about child-related issues and reinforce the need to consider the [voice of the child](#). They also dip sample three PPNs per month and provide feedback to officers and collate wider learning. The constabulary told us that social services had commented positively on the good quality of initial PPNs.

The constabulary works effectively with other organisations to keep victims who are vulnerable people safe

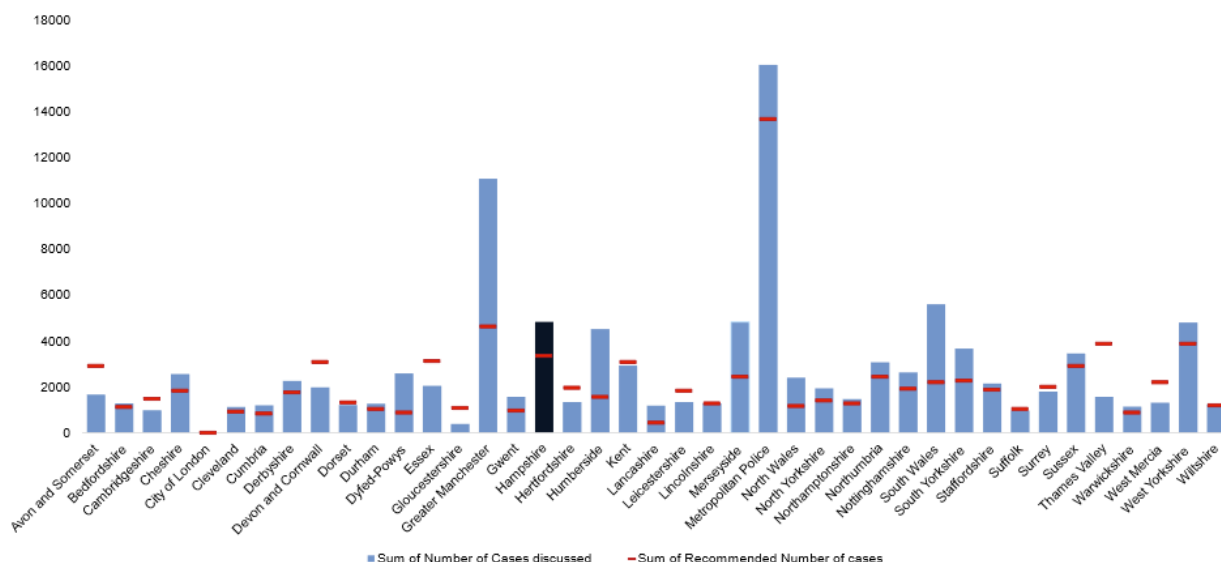
The constabulary works well with partners within the multi-agency safeguarding hub. It uses an effective robotic process that immediately sorts incoming PPN referrals into risk order, making sure that high-risk cases are prioritised, especially those that involve children. The constabulary often faces backlogs in triaging referrals. It has an escalation process in place that allows overtime to be paid and extra trained personnel to be brought in from other departments when the backlog reaches a certain number. While this process is effective, it comes at a high financial cost in overtime. It is reassuring to see that the constabulary has recently agreed a permanent uplift in personnel. This should significantly reduce operating costs while maintaining performance.

[Multi-agency risk assessment conference \(MARAC\)](#) processes for domestic abuse cases are effective. They bring together police and partner agencies to share intelligence and to jointly support individual agencies in solutions aimed at reducing risk. We observed several MARACS and found they were run by well-trained chairs from a range of partners, including local safeguarding services and housing. There was effective information sharing and good case discussion. This led to recorded actions being allocated to specific partners to make sure there was accountability.

However, while most cases coming to the MARAC were appropriate, some didn't appear to meet the standard MARAC referral criteria. The constabulary needs to improve its decision-making process with partners to make sure that only the right cases are referred. This will also help reduce what are sometimes excessively long MARAC meetings.

In the year ending 30 September 2024, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary discussed 4,845 cases at the MARAC. This was higher than the number of recommended cases, which is 40 per 10,000 women within the local population (3,360 in total).

Figure 5: Number of cases discussed and recommended number of cases to discuss at MARACs for forces in England and Wales, in the year ending 30 September 2024



Source: MARAC data from [SafeLives](#)

The constabulary is active in safeguarding vulnerable people and challenging the behaviour of perpetrators

The constabulary is maximising opportunities to tackle persistent domestic abuse offending and stem the cycle of abuse. [Project Foundation](#) is an innovative scheme that brings together the constabulary and specialist domestic abuse perpetrator practitioners from the Hampton Trust. The aim is to identify and manage the most dangerous perpetrators, with a focus on abuse in family settings. Practitioners, with police, make unannounced visits to perpetrators. They offer perpetrators diversionary opportunities such as schemes that aim to tackle alcohol, drug, mental health or financial issues. District police teams manage offenders locally via the monthly tactical planning meeting. Project Foundation practitioners attend these meetings. A risk management plan exists for each perpetrator, and outcomes of the joint visit for each offender are recorded in these. Enforcement measures are also considered for those offenders who refuse to work with them.

Managing offenders and suspects

Adequate

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is adequate at managing offenders and suspects.

Area for improvement

The constabulary has improved its management of failure to appear at court arrest warrants but needs to do more to find and arrest those offenders

Until a few months ago, failure to appear at court arrest warrants were managed within the constabulary's [management of sexual offenders and violent offenders](#) teams. These teams had limited opportunities to develop [intelligence](#) on outstanding offenders. The constabulary's intelligence function now manages these, where a small team of [officers](#) and [staff](#) aims to locate outstanding offenders. It does this by using police and partner organisations' databases such as those of local authorities.

The problem remains that there is limited activity to arrest these offenders. They are often regarded as less of a priority than outstanding suspects for live police cases. There are occasional weeks of action known as Operation Relentless. These include successful targeting of those wanted at court. But outside these events, little is progressed. Consequently, the constabulary told us that the number of warrants had remained relatively static at over 1,000, although January 2025 was the first month when the number of warrants executed exceeded the number of new warrants coming in from court.

The constabulary needs to apply greater focus to actively looking for and arresting those who are subject to a failure to appear at court arrest warrant. Equally, it needs to increase efforts to work with the Crown Prosecution Service to have some historical warrants correctly rescinded at court. This, in turn, would reduce the number of persons shown as wanted on warrant.

Innovative practice

The constabulary works with partners to support families affected when someone is under investigation, arrested or sentenced for an online child image offence

The constabulary has linked up with [Hope After Harm](#), a registered charity that provides services and non-judgmental support to families and friends affected by crime. The constabulary has obtained funding through the office of the [police and crime commissioner](#) and agreed 100 referrals to Hope After Harm per year linked to online [child](#) image offending. The charity is a listening ear and provides practical support around the judicial process. Where applicable, it will also support and advise families if children's services become involved. The constabulary has also established the role of family contact [officer](#) within its internet child abuse team. This person works alongside Hope After Harm to provide support to the suspects and their families. The family contact officer also completes regular [bail](#) reviews, including an enhanced [risk assessment](#).

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary manages offenders and suspects.

The constabulary effectively manages the potential risks posed by dangerous offenders in the community but could do more to maximise intelligence gathering opportunities

The constabulary has dedicated MOSOVO teams, which identify, manage and mitigate the potential risks posed by registered sex offenders and other dangerous offenders in the community. Offender managers carry out a key role in MOSOVO teams. For each registered sex offender, offender managers complete [active risk management](#) assessments and risk management plans, and they carry out home visits. Sergeants as supervisors play a key role in making sure these activities are carried out in a timely and effective manner. At the start of our inspection work, the constabulary was experiencing notable backlogs in supervisory sign-offs. It is reassuring to see that the numbers outstanding have reduced significantly since then. This has been helped, in part, by an increase in supervisors, with the MOSOVO teams now at full strength.

As part of their effective management of registered sex offenders, offender managers create intelligence profiles, which should be constantly reviewed. Checks against the constabulary's intelligence systems, the [Police National Database](#), the [Police National Computer](#), other relevant databases and with partner agencies all assist in building these profiles. The results of these checks inform the decision-making. However, the constabulary doesn't use the Police National Database to check all its registered sex offenders in the community. This could mean that it isn't getting all the intelligence it requires to complete an active risk management assessment and risk management plan. It does, however, complete a check of the database if a suspect's assessment is more than a month overdue.

The constabulary maximises opportunities for early identification and positive action against those individuals who pose a risk of sexual harm to the public

Officers and staff in MOSOVO teams are increasingly using different types of orders that are available to apply restrictive conditions or positive obligations on registered sex offenders. For those charged with a sexual offence, [Sexual Harm Prevention Orders \(SHPOs\)](#) are applied for in every relevant case, along with forfeiture and destruction of digital devices. MOSOVO teams also support other units, such as the child abuse investigation teams, criminal investigation department (CID) and internet child abuse team (ICAT) in drafting SHPOs. This is to make sure the right conditions are applied. In the year ending 31 March 2024, 240 SHPOs were issued and 120 were breached. The number issued exceeds the previous year to 31 March 2023 by 30 percent, when 184 SHPOs were issued.

The constabulary has effective operating procedures in place to identify individuals at the earliest opportunity whose behaviour may pose a risk of sexual harm. It actively reviews its intelligence databases and crime reporting systems to identify potential offenders. Analysis is provided to supervisors in MOSOVO teams for review. Where a risk is confirmed, a sexual risk notice is sent to local officers to consider positive interventions. The aim of these interventions is to prevent offending. These notices are periodically reviewed by the MOSOVO teams to make sure appropriate action has been taken.

The constabulary has increased its use of [Sexual Risk Orders](#) against suspects where there is insufficient evidence to support a charge. It has recently appointed two protective orders co-ordinators to work with the constabulary solicitor, with the aim of trying to get more orders in place. There is a weekly meeting to assess these cases, which makes sure that consistent advice is given to officers and staff. The constabulary told us that between 1 March 2024 and 1 February 2025, 10 full Sexual Risk Orders and 16 interim Sexual Risk Orders were granted at court.

The constabulary effectively investigates people suspected of online offences linked to child sexual abuse material

The constabulary receives referrals from the National Crime Agency and other law enforcement agencies relating to people suspected of accessing, possessing, making, taking or distributing [indecent images of children](#) online. Officers from the constabulary's ICAT prioritise action against identified individuals using a nationally approved digital risk prioritisation tool. The constabulary allocates some cases assessed as low risk to local CID teams.

The constabulary has sufficient personnel within the ICAT, but they are extremely busy as their workloads increase in line with a rising number of National Crime Agency referrals. As a result, the constabulary told us that it had recently created six new posts in the ICAT. It has offered these to non-CID officers on a six-month secondment. Once posted, these officers will receive training and support the ICAT in acting against identified, suspected offenders, including those lower risk cases that would have been previously referred to local policing.

The constabulary needs to improve how it oversees the bail process for people arrested for online offences linked to indecent images of children

People who access images of online child abuse may pose a risk to the public. For those suspects who have been arrested but not yet charged, the use of bail with appropriate conditions is crucial in minimising the potential for further offending. This may include imposing conditions such as restricting access to children, even on suspects with no known physical access to children. It can also involve restricting their use and access to digital devices and online services.

The constabulary's use of bail for managing ICAT suspects is improving and rather than being [released under investigation](#), bail is now used as default when releasing suspects. However, the constabulary needs to continue to monitor its use of bail and make sure that bail with safeguarding conditions is always considered. At the same time, the constabulary isn't always completing bail checks on ICAT suspects. In particular, if conditions are in place to allow devices to be checked, these should be enforced. Some bail checks are being done for high-risk cases and there is effective information sharing taking place with children's services.

Building, supporting and protecting the workforce

Good

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary is good at building, supporting and protecting the workforce.

Innovative practice

The constabulary is committed to supporting all neurodivergent officers and staff

In 2021, the constabulary introduced a substantive neurodiversity specialist advisor post to provide the constabulary with guidance on all neurodivergence-related matters. The role includes leading the neurodiversity workplace needs assessment team, which carries out assessments for a range of neurodivergent conditions. It includes voluntary dyslexia screening, which is offered as part of the joining process to all new entrants. This early intervention allows implementation of support from day one to improve performance, reduce stress and anxiety and retain and develop [officers](#) and [staff](#). The constabulary told us that since its inception, approximately 1,600 [personnel](#) had received support. In 2023, a neurodiversity support network was created to offer neurodivergent officers and staff an opportunity to share lived experiences and support one another. This extends to family members and parents or carers of neurodivergent [children](#).

The constabulary has been innovative in reducing the loss of skill and experience to ill health retirements

The constabulary has created two new posts to support [officers](#) and [staff](#) who are on long-term sickness or struggling with repeat absence. A dedicated well-being case worker supports individuals and line managers to access the correct well-being provision from the range of services available. The constabulary has also established a strategic adjusted duties advisor role to work with line managers, HR caseworkers, occupational health and the individual concerned in cases where there is suggestion of an ill health retirement application or long-term sickness that requires a recuperative role.

This has allowed the constabulary to use the skills and experience of [personnel](#) on limited duties to support areas of risk and priority, both in the short and long term. It has also helped to provide meaningful work and stability for individuals at a personally challenging time. Through effective communication, the constabulary has created a culture with a wider understanding of limited duties terminology, processes and outcomes to make sure it is more inclusive. The constabulary told us that in January 2025, it saw its long-term absence cases reach their lowest level for 12 months and that it hoped numbers would continue to decrease.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary builds, supports and protects the workforce.

The constabulary provides comprehensive well-being support to officers and staff

Officers and staff benefit from a range of well-being support. The constabulary funds counselling externally where this is required and has invested in an employee assistance programme. This programme provides 24-hour access to a range of health and well-being information. The constabulary has introduced a 'sustaining resilience at work' (StRAW), peer-support network. StRAW practitioners are trained to support staff and officers who might be experiencing mental health issues or feel overwhelmed or highly stressed. The constabulary also has effective [trauma risk management](#) provision, which it intends to expand. Line managers are trained in defusing to support personnel who have experienced a traumatic encounter. Under the new operating model, the constabulary has also re-established a trained group of on-call well-being leads at chief inspector level. The purpose of this group is to provide well-being oversight for any significant traumatic incidents.

The constabulary needs to do more to support police officers and staff affected by the changes to its policing model

Many officers and staff across the constabulary felt under pressure over the summer in 2024 when demand for police services increased significantly. The constabulary told us it was managing high rates of sickness absence linked to stress and anxiety. This necessitated the formation of an ongoing gold group to understand and better manage sickness. The constabulary told us that sickness rates were now declining, and it was confident that its summer resourcing plans for 2025 will help it to both reduce and spread workloads more evenly.

The constabulary has made resourcing decisions that have disproportionately affected some specialist investigation units, in particular the child abuse investigation teams and Operation Amberstone, which deals with rape and serious sexual offences. This has led to higher levels of sickness linked to stress and anxiety compared to other units. It has also led at times to a perception that these personnel aren't as valued. The constabulary has made a firm commitment to these officers and staff to improve their situation by recruiting new personnel and reducing caseloads. It has also prioritised these specialist units for transferees and those people newly qualifying as professionalising investigations programme level 2 detectives. There is also a bespoke rape and serious sexual offences well-being provision in place. This includes rapid access to counselling services, regular pulse surveys and frequent meetings with senior officers to better understand and address issues as they arise. We will monitor whether these interventions have a positive effect on the resilience of officers and staff in the future.

The constabulary provides effective and practical support to student officers

The constabulary recognises the challenges for student officers as they move from the controlled environment of training school into operational policing roles. It provides wraparound support from the outset to better prepare them for entry into response teams and, ultimately, independent patrol status. Pre-employment events emphasise the realities of operational policing and aim to identify those who may not be able to accept significant changes to their lives. Initial training makes use of a range of officers and staff with different operational backgrounds. These personnel aim to bring realism to the training, including scenario-based activities. Student officers meet their sergeants and new team before leaving training school. They are allocated a coach to help them make a gradual immersion into operational policing. They are also assigned a professional development and assessment officer from training school who will regularly assess them in liaison with their coach and sergeant. Students also complete five core attachments over their probationary period, including a week's attachment to CID.

The constabulary is improving its retention rate for officers and staff

The constabulary has effective provision in place to try to retain personnel who may be thinking of leaving the organisation. It has introduced the 'say and stay' process, which allows officers and staff to convey their thoughts of leaving and request an interview with a senior manager who will try to resolve their issues. The constabulary told us that as at January 2025, there had been 83 requests for a say and stay interview. These led to only 11 individuals leaving, which equates to a retention rate of 87 percent.

The constabulary has recently adopted new processes for carrying out exit interviews when people leave the organisation. An automated process now alerts line managers about those who have resigned in time to carry out an exit interview. There is now an online form for the interviewer to use that makes sure they collect important data on why the person is leaving. The constabulary told us that this had already led to some good feedback, although it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of this change in the process.

It is hoped that the constabulary's new forward-focusing personal development record process will also support officer and staff retention. Managers are required to hold regular one-to-one sessions with personnel, which is supported by a new digital personal development record application. In this new process, it is the responsibility of the person assessed to provide evidence of their performance and career objectives. Managers are also required to ask about and record the stated well-being of the individual. This can provide an early indication of whether a person is thinking of leaving so that positive interventions can be used that aim to retain them.

The constabulary is effectively developing its first-line leaders but needs to better support those in acting rank

The constabulary is taking steps to improve its training provision for sergeants in recognition that training is often provided too late after officers are in post. It has recently introduced a new training pathway that has removed interview boards in favour of an accreditation process at the point of passing the exam. Entry into the process requires the initial support of both the candidate's line manager and second-line manager. Once on the pathway, candidates begin a six-month development programme in acting sergeant roles. During the programme, they complete a portfolio of competence including a final written 'Why Me Why Now?' statement. At the successful conclusion of the process, officers are signed off as substantive sergeants. They then carry out a two-week operational leadership course prior to being posted.

The constabulary regularly uses acting sergeants to fill supervisory gaps. However, some people in this role have voiced concerns that they don't feel adequately prepared. The constabulary has recently recognised that it needs to better support acting sergeants and now allows them to attend the operational leadership

course, subject to availability. The constabulary told us that as at 28 February 2025, 121 officers had successfully completed the operational leadership course.

The constabulary actively supports officers and staff from under-represented groups to maximise retention

The constabulary actively works with its diverse workforce via its 12 support networks. Each network is aligned to a dedicated [chief officer](#) to whom it can feed back issues and challenges and promote improvements. Many of the networks also operate a buddy system to support officers and staff who have similar characteristics.

The networks come together regularly to make sure there is a consistent approach. They receive good support from the constabulary's inclusion and well-being team. For example, the team has established maternity support single points of contact who maintain contact with officers and staff on maternity leave. The team also supports applications for flexible working and liaise with line managers and personnel as required. This collaborative process between the networks and the inclusion and well-being team has also been effective in identifying barriers to recruitment and retention for people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The constabulary uses positive action as a way of improving the confidence of people in under-represented groups to become leaders

The constabulary has created the 'Advance' programme, which is a development initiative to help individuals better realise their potential. Advance provides participants with knowledge and understanding to fulfil future leadership roles and helps to overcome barriers around self-doubt and lack of confidence. The programme has 16 places with 12 set aside for female candidates and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Police officers and staff can propose themselves for a place, but support networks are also encouraged to suggest candidates who could be offered the opportunity. The programme is now in its fifth year, and the constabulary told us that it was yielding positive results. It told us that around 80 percent of programme participants went on to achieve promotion.

The 'police development programme' (PDP) is a cohort of potential leaders who are offered secondments and other development opportunities. This includes support in the completion of applications or interviews. Officer and staff associations and networks regularly sponsor their members to apply. At the time of our inspection, the constabulary told us that 20.3 percent of PDP participants were people from ethnic minority backgrounds. The PDP is directly contributing towards the constabulary's retention of officers and staff who are looking for leadership roles. The constabulary told us that 60 percent of participants surveyed at the point of entering the PDP programme had thought of leaving the service. However, this dropped to 20 percent when surveyed again at the end of the course. The constabulary also found that 93.4 percent of participants were considering future career progression compared to 20 percent before completing the PDP.

Leadership and force management

Adequate

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's leadership and management is adequate.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary has an effective process for scrutinising performance but needs to make sure data is used correctly to support the process

The constabulary has an effective governance structure in place with clearly defined performance meetings at all levels that hold managers to account. It uses data to support the process, including Power BI products that provide usable information to managers. However, data gaps and inaccuracies are also present across various systems. These have a negative effect on performance and productivity. We found gaps in data on the use of [body-worn video](#), use of force and [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#) rates, among other things. Equally, limitations in the constabulary's computer-aided resource management system have led to capability and capacity shortfalls in frontline teams. These limitations have also made it difficult for [officers](#) and [staff](#) to take time off at times when capability and capacity levels were in fact sufficient.

At the same time, where data has been available and indicated underperformance, the constabulary hasn't always responded effectively. For example, the constabulary failed to properly consider and act on data that showed a continuing rise in officers not having up-to-date public and personal safety training. Equally some [neighbourhood policing team](#) officers had unmanageable crime workloads, yet the constabulary took the time to introduce processes to properly identify and support them. The constabulary should make sure it has all the information it needs to optimise performance. And it should make sure its leaders better address changes in performance. This will help it provide the best possible service to the public and better support its workforce.

The constabulary needs to improve the functionality of its operating model to better manage demand

The constabulary's move to a new area model has had a positive effect on performance. It has also helped the constabulary to have better focus and control of [personnel](#) and assets at local level. But the change hasn't been without its challenges. Key operational areas of the constabulary, including response, neighbourhood and investigative policing, have at times been severely stretched. [Officer](#) shortages in response teams have affected arrival times on scene, while [neighbourhood policing team](#) officers have often needed to fill the gaps in response teams. This has reduced their ability to carry out their problem-solving and community-focused activities. Some specialist investigative teams, such as those dealing with rape and serious sexual offences or [child](#) abuse cases, have also been disproportionately affected by personnel shortages. This has led to high case workloads. The problems were particularly acute in the summer of 2024 when demand for service increased. During our inspection, we found that the constabulary was using overtime extensively to manage demand. This isn't uncommon and can be appropriate but is also a symptom of being under resourced.

The constabulary has learned from the negative effects that summer 2024 demand had on both operational performance and officer and [staff](#) well-being. It has comprehensive plans in place for summer 2025, which it is confident will lead to improvements in both areas. These include improvements in the processes behind resourcing to better manage allocation of duties, annual leave and days off.

The demand issues that the constabulary is facing have been compounded by weaknesses within its crime allocation model. The constabulary has removed its central crime resolution team, which has reduced its ability to complete investigations that involve only limited enquiries. Instead, it now has a central triage process that sees all crimes, except those that can be immediately finalised, sent to local units for further investigation. This has led to a significant increase in investigations, especially for neighbourhood policing team officers who at times struggle to manage high caseloads. The constabulary is actively reviewing its crime allocation processes to help it to deal with more crimes at source. This should reduce the number of crimes being sent on for further investigation. We will monitor for improvements over the coming months.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to leadership and management.

The constabulary has effective governance and tasking processes that balance local and national priorities

The constabulary holds monthly tasking and co-ordination group meetings at district, area and constabulary level. These meetings provide the framework for managers to identify operational priorities and to deploy police and a wide range of partner agency resources to tackle these issues. There is a clear focus on identifying, prioritising and mitigating the key criminal threats at national, regional and constabulary level. District commanders use the [‘Let’s Talk’ community survey](#) results to identify local priorities. The constabulary also uses the PCC’s community surveys to check that Let’s Talk findings are a true representation of community concerns. Where local issues escalate and require additional or specialist resources, the process is complemented by a weekly tasking meeting at district and area level. At this meeting, specialist resources are allocated according to priorities. These include overt resources such as roads policing or covert assets such as surveillance teams. The constabulary responds to any urgent tasking needs via its daily management meeting process.

The constabulary understands how senior and general leadership is perceived by the workforce and what is expected of leaders

The constabulary’s senior leadership team has high expectations of officers and staff and is supportive and appreciative in equal measure. The workforce considers its senior leaders to be effective in their decision-making around the strategy and direction of the constabulary. Most personnel appreciate the decisive and rapid move to the new area model. However, some felt there were aspects that could have benefitted from greater planning and that, at times, the constabulary hadn’t managed change as effectively as it could have.

The constabulary aims to make sure senior leaders have a collective purpose. It holds six-monthly senior leaders’ conferences for ranks of chief inspector or above and police staff equivalent. There is a strong focus on the challenges that the constabulary is facing with an emphasis on the importance of senior leaders’ ability to meet them.

The constabulary is helping leaders provide effective communications using [SMART](#) principles. Each week it sends all supervisors a ‘Five in Five’ briefing, which is five things to share with their team in five minutes. There is a lot of discussion within the chief officer team about what to include to make sure that key messages are prioritised. The constabulary has also encouraged a culture of internal communication that involves better targeting of messaging to a more specific audience. This means there is less to read, which improves the reception of messages and saves time for officers and staff.

Leaders at all ranks are expected to actively promote high standards of professional behaviour that support a culture of inclusiveness. The constabulary has developed a mandatory training programme called 'Inclusion Matters' with a firm focus on leaders being upstanders not bystanders, challenging inappropriate behaviour and applying the code of ethics to all policing activities.

The constabulary maximises the productivity of its assets, including optimising digital innovation

The constabulary is effective in using technology to boost productivity and is benefiting from its collaboration with Thames Valley Police via a joint ICT unit. The constabulary told us that its use of automation had already saved the equivalent of £2.8 million or 102,285 hours. This is across 9 operational areas with 17 separate automations. These include crime filing, use of a redaction tool and several robotic processes in the multi-agency safeguarding hub that make it easier and quicker to share data with partners.

The constabulary links its estates and vehicle fleet strategies to the new area model

The constabulary has an effective estates strategy that links to the new area model. It has opened several new police stations. These accommodate both newly created teams and existing operational units that have moved to better manage local demand for service. The strategy also focuses firmly on enhancing public accessibility to police stations with the creation of several new front counters. Management of the constabulary's estate has improved significantly with the movement of its facilities management team from local authority control to the control of the office of the PCC. As a result, the constabulary told us that it had seen an 80 percent improvement in positive responses to reported building faults.

The constabulary is forward thinking in making sure that it optimises its vehicle fleet to help the area model to operate effectively. At the 70 percent point of the end use date, it replaces its district policing team response cars and reallocates the older vehicles to its neighbourhood policing team. These older vehicles are then used less intensively, which extends their lifespan and improves their resale value. It also means that neighbourhood policing team officers have improved access to response cars, which makes it easier for them to support district policing teams at times of high demand. At the same time, the constabulary recognises that management of its fleet requires improvement. An identified strategic risk is a lack of vehicle telematics for tracking purposes. The constabulary recognises that this is needed to help it better understand its vehicle requirements for the future.

The constabulary has adopted a wise and effective approach to its finances

The constabulary shows effective financial management of the funds it has available to provide efficient police services. It employs a chief financial officer jointly with the office of the PCC. This allows it to translate the constabulary's plans and priorities, which are reflected in the PCCs plans, into a viable medium-term financial strategy. In the financial year ending 31 March 2024, the constabulary received a total of £448.1 million in funding, which was £220,000 per 1,000 population. This is in line with the typical rate for forces in England and Wales. In the same financial year, £180.1 million (40.2 percent) of its total funding was through council tax precept.

The constabulary has forecasted a budget deficit of £19 million by the end of the medium-term financial plan for 2028/29. It is likely that it will need to make savings to balance the budget. As at 31 March 2024, the constabulary had a good level of total usable reserves at £148 million. Total projected reserves will be £57 million by 31 March 2029. This is due, in part, to sound financial management by the constabulary. The constabulary projects that general reserves will remain at a sensible £18 million by the end of the medium-term financial plan period.

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