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in the public interest

# Crime inspection 2014

Derbyshire Police

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# How effective is the force at cutting crime?

## Overall summary

Derbyshire has seen bigger reductions in crime over the last four years than England and Wales as a whole. The police work well with partners to prevent crime and reduce re-offending.

Neighbourhood policing remains at the heart of the constabulary's approach and safer neighbourhood teams understand their local community concerns and priorities, using a range of effective tactics to fight crime and prevent it.

HMIC found that there is a strong focus on the victim and the constabulary has made good progress in taking steps to ensure that the most vulnerable are protected. Victim satisfaction with policing services is higher in Derbyshire than the rate for England and Wales.

Whilst anti-social behaviour is not a constabulary priority, there is good work taking place in the neighbourhood teams to tackle anti-social behaviour; although more could be done to learn from what works.

This year, HMIC undertook an inspection into the crime data integrity of all 43 police forces, to determine the extent to which police-recorded crime information can be trusted at a national level. HMIC found Derbyshire Constabulary's approach to crime recording is good, with a high degree of accuracy. Individual force reports are available at <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/>

**How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?**

**Good**

The constabulary has a victim-centred approach with a strong focus on ensuring that the most vulnerable victims receive a joined-up service from all organisations. HMIC found good evidence of front line staff working with partners to find ways to divert offenders and prevent crime.

Crime in Derbyshire has reduced by 21 percent reduction over the last four years, which is a greater reduction than the figure for England and Wales. The constabulary works well with partners across Derbyshire in using a range of tactics to prevent crime and reduce re-offending.

HMIC found that the constabulary's ability to measure the impact of its activities is limited. The constabulary has recognised this and is starting to develop better ways to evaluate activities.

**How effective is the force at investigating offending?**

**Good**

Derbyshire has a strong focus on providing a good service to victims, particularly on identifying the most vulnerable and ensuring the risks to them are properly understood and addressed by both police and partners.

HMIC found some excellent work going on to scrutinise investigations, to understand the reasons why some fail to result in convictions and improve the quality and outcomes of future investigations. However the constabulary needs to do more to learn from what works in crime fighting and crime prevention tactics.

The constabulary is working well in identifying and tackling the most prolific offenders through a joined-up approach with partners, working with those causing the greatest risk to the public to prevent them from re-offending.

**How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?**

**Good**

Derbyshire Constabulary shows a strong commitment to neighbourhood policing and the safer neighbourhood teams have a good understanding of local concerns and priorities.

Neighbourhood officers work well with local people in tackling anti-social behaviour and are committed to ensuring the most vulnerable people in their communities are protected.

Partnership working in tackling anti-social behaviour is strong and constructive. The police work well with local authority partners in understanding local anti-social behaviour concerns and finding creative solutions.

**How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?**

**Good**

Derbyshire Constabulary has an effective strategic threat and risk assessment that helps to meet the needs of the community by prioritising resource where it is needed most.

**How effective is the force at investigating offending?**

**Good**

**How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?**

**Good**

HMIC found that the constabulary needs to do more to understand what works in tackling anti-social behaviour locally and share this widely so that all can learn from good practice.

# Introduction

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This inspection looks at how effective police forces are at cutting crime. The public expects the police to reduce, prevent and investigate crime, bring suspects to justice and, in conjunction with other services and agencies, care for victims. To assess each force's effectiveness, we looked at three specific areas:

- How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?
- How effective is the force at investigating offending?
- How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

# Methodology

During our inspection we analysed data and documents from forces, and conducted in-force inspections. We interviewed the senior officers responsible for crime, neighbourhood policing and victim care in each force. We held focus groups with frontline police officers, investigators and police staff, and observed their activities first hand. We also reviewed 20 crime investigations in each force and interviewed heads of partner organisations such as local authorities. We focused on anti-social behaviour and the offences of: burglary dwelling; serious sexual offences; and violence with injury on this inspection. We chose to focus on these offences because they cover the areas of acquisitive and violent crime and the protection of vulnerable people. This has allowed us to make an assessment of how well the constabulary treated the victim throughout the investigation – examining in particular how well officers gathered evidence and how well they were supervised.

Victims are at the heart of this inspection. Victims are entitled to a service from the police; this includes regular information about their case, an opportunity to provide an impact statement where relevant and to be consulted on potential criminal justice outcomes. When the police provide this service to victims, it increases victim satisfaction and builds trust and confidence in the police.

As part of this inspection, we considered how well forces deal with domestic abuse, alongside other offence types. HMIC published a report in March 2014 on how well forces tackled domestic abuse and provided support to victims. As a result of that inspection all forces were asked to provide an action plan setting out how they were improving services to victims of domestic abuse and we have reviewed the action plans developed by forces. The action plans have not informed the judgments made in these reports.

The crime inspection provides HMIC with the first opportunity to test whether the force's approach to improving how it tackles domestic abuse is beginning to have an effect and this forms part of our overall assessment of the force.



# How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?

HMIC looked at how the leadership of the constabulary deploys its resources to reduce the volume of crimes being committed, maximise the quality of victim contact, and ensure that the constabulary focuses on community priorities whilst mitigating national threats.

We looked at how the constabulary prevents crime, how it uses police tactics such as stop and search powers to prevent and detect crime and reduce offending. We also looked at how the police work with other agencies such as social services to reduce crime.

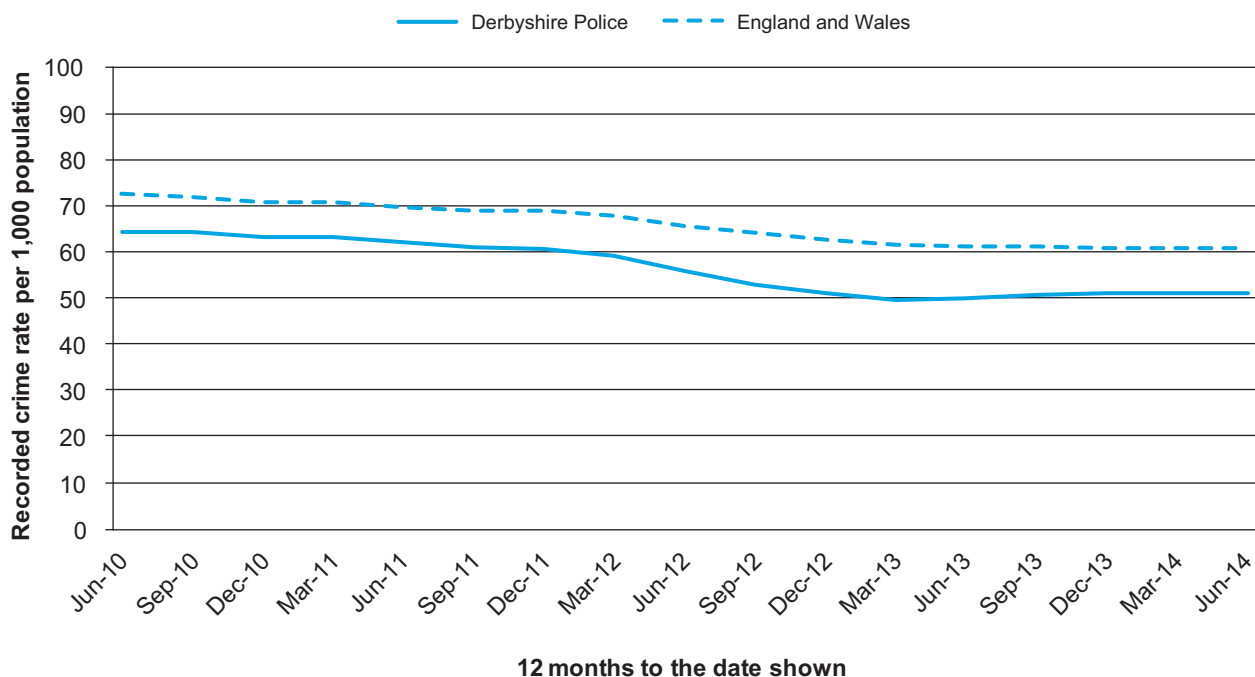
## Crime

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. When compared with the 12 months to June 2010, recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the 12 months to June 2014 reduced by 21 percent in Derbyshire compared with a reduction of 16 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this period, victim-based crime (i.e., crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 22 percent in Derbyshire, compared with a reduction of 16 percent across England and Wales.

During the 12 months prior to the end of June 2014, recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Derbyshire increased by 2 percent, compared with a 1 percent reduction across England and Wales.

Figure: Recorded crime rate (per 1,000 population) between June 2010 and June 2014.



By looking at how many recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour occur per 1,000 population, we get an indication of how safe it is for the public in that police area. The table below shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Derbyshire (per 1,000 population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.

12 months to June 2014	Derbyshire Constabulary rate (per 1,000 population)	England and Wales total rate (per 1,000 population)
Crime excluding fraud	50.8	60.7
Victim-based crime	46.0	53.9
Sexual offences	0.9	1.2
Violence with injury	5.5	5.9
Burglary in a dwelling*	6.6	8.9
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	45.5	36.8

**\*Note that anti-social behaviour data is for the 12 months to March 2014 and the rate for burglary in a dwelling is the rate per 1,000 households, not population.**

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the force area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on recorded crime rates only. For information on the frequency of other kinds of crimes in your area, go to [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/crime-and-policing-comparator](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/crime-and-policing-comparator)

Derbyshire’s detection rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to the end of March 2014 was 27 percent which was broadly in line the 26 percent for England and Wales.

The new crime outcomes framework was introduced in April 2014. It replaces a previous framework for recording how the police finalise investigations through what was known as ‘sanction detections’ (e.g. charges and/or summons). The new crime outcomes framework is designed to support police officers to use their professional judgment to ensure a just and timely outcome which reflects the harm to the victim, the seriousness of the offending behaviour, the impact on the community, and which deters future offending. Data on the full range of outcomes achieved as a result of investigations (not just detections but also, for example, community resolutions such as mediation known as restorative justice) will be available from July 2015 and used in future HMIC inspections.

## Meeting the needs of the community

Derbyshire Constabulary has a mature and effective process for working constructively with partner organisations to translate the priorities from the police and crime commissioner's four year police and crime plan into a set of annual police priorities. Each year the constabulary holds a strategic threat and risk assessment seminar, which brings together partners including the office of the police and crime commissioner, the local authorities, probation service, the voluntary sector and health partners. The result of this session is a collective agreement on the crime and community safety priorities for the year ahead. Police and partners all sign up to targeting resources to tackle the agreed priorities. After six months another joint seminar is held and the assessment is refreshed and amended as needed. This approach represents national good practice.

Within the constabulary there is strong oversight of police actions to achieve these priorities. A senior officer is assigned to lead on each priority and is held to account for progress by the assistant chief constable at monthly meetings. The eight priorities agreed for 2014 include acquisitive crime, rape, alcohol related harm and drugs.

Derbyshire Constabulary can demonstrate that resources are aligned to tackling priorities and that when progress has been made, priorities shift to more pressing community threats and risks. For example, last year the joint strategic threat and risk seminar identified an emerging risk from cyber-crime that at the time the constabulary and partners were ill-equipped to tackle. This led to a focus on providing staff with the tools, skills and expertise to address the threat from cyber-crime. This year cyber-crime does not appear in the list of constabulary priorities. There was a general agreement that whilst it remains a threat, the constabulary has taken sufficient steps and it is now able to deal effectively with the risks. It was replaced by rape, which was assessed as a greater risk to victims.

## Quality of victim contact

The constabulary has a strong focus on improving the service to victims and understanding the causes of victim dissatisfaction. In addition to the victim surveys that all forces undertake, the constabulary routinely includes additional questions of victims to gain a better insight into the causes of dissatisfaction. It found that, like many forces, victims are most dissatisfied when the police fail to provide the desired level of communication and regular updates as to the progress of investigations. The constabulary has introduced a victim's contract which is given to every victim when a police officer attends either a crime or an incident. The contract is unique to that victim and sets out clearly the agreed nature and frequency of contact that the victim wishes to have as the investigation proceeds. The officer is then required to ensure that they fulfil the terms set out in the contract. This means that both police and victims are clear about the expected level of service. Partners told us that these contracts are valued by victims, although there are still occasions when victims do not receive the updates they would like.

There is strong and visible leadership from the chief constable in improving public confidence and satisfaction. The deputy chief constable chairs a confidence steering group which is driving improvement and levels of victim satisfaction with the police are higher in Derbyshire than the rate for England and Wales. The constabulary has recently produced a staff training video which includes victims talking about their experiences with police investigations, in order to reinforce the importance of good communication and the victim contracts.

An important measure of the impact of changes to service delivery for the public is how satisfied victims are with the overall service they receive when they seek police assistance. In the 12 months to the end of June 2014, Derbyshire had a victim satisfaction rate of 88.0 percent ( $\pm$  1.4 percent) which is higher than the satisfaction rate in England and Wales of 85.0 percent ( $\pm$  0.2 percent). Its current rate is broadly in line with the 86.7 percent ( $\pm$  1.4 percent) recorded for Derbyshire in the previous year.

## Use of police tactics

Derbyshire Constabulary uses a broad range of effective tactics to prevent crime and reduce re-offending. HMIC found evidence that the constabulary is using the full range of its powers and tactics to disrupt crime and divert offenders, for example the new police power to issue domestic violence protection notices (DVPNs) has been widely used in Derbyshire to prevent domestic abuse offenders from having contact with their victims for a set period. The value to the victims of this tactic is widely understood by officers and over 40 DVPNs have been issued so far. The constabulary also demonstrates a strong commitment to diverting young people away from crime, for example the power to stop problem young drivers by the threat of seizing their cars is used to good effect. Letters to parents and other community resolutions are used to prevent young people becoming criminalised, and divert them away from crime at an early stage.

The constabulary has a strong focus on protecting vulnerable people and has introduced a policy for identifying and dealing effectively with people who are susceptible to harm. There is, for example, a multi-agency approach known as vulnerable adults risk management, which ensures that vulnerable adults are dealt with in a joined-up way so that they get the help they need from all public and voluntary services.

## Partnership working and information sharing

At both a strategic and tactical level, there is good and constructive partnership working to prevent crime and offending. Neighbourhood policing remains at the heart of Derbyshire's approach to policing. The safer neighbourhood teams work across a range of multi-agency teams and frontline staff work well with partners to find ways to divert offenders and prevent crime. There is a mature and well established process for working with the full range of local partners to identify and manage serious and serial offenders through an integrated offender management programme.

The constabulary is in the process of introducing a new improved database on which to share information at neighbourhood level with partners. While the new system will allow better information sharing at the local level, HMIC found that the system is of more limited value in terms of capturing good practice and sharing it beyond the local neighbourhood across the constabulary area. This means that opportunities to learn from what works may be missed.

## Domestic abuse

In March 2014 HMIC published the results of its inspection of 43 forces on the effectiveness of the police approach to domestic violence, with a focus on outcomes for victims and whether risks to victims are adequately managed. This included clear recommendations for each force about improvements it should make. As a result of this inspection all forces were required to produce and publish an action plan setting out the steps they were taking to improve the services to victims of domestic abuse. This plan should demonstrate that HMIC recommendations are being addressed and also explain how:

- the leadership will ensure the changes necessary and hold the right people to account;
- the police response when a victim first contacts them (by a 999 call or by visiting a police station) and when they first attend the scene of the incident is improved;
- the force will ensure there is a high quality investigation of all domestic abuse crime;
- victims will be properly supported and offenders properly managed; and
- the training and learning provided to officers ensures they can give the best available response to the victim.

HMIC has made an initial consideration of the action plan submitted by Derbyshire Constabulary. We found the plan outlines a broad range of activity that is in line with the agreed national priorities for forces outlined above. It details how the force will improve their response to domestic abuse, and makes direct reference to HMIC recommendations.

The crime inspection provided us with our first opportunity to test whether changes in the force's approach to domestic abuse were beginning to have a positive effect.

HMIC found evidence that Derbyshire Constabulary has made progress to improve its response to domestic abuse. The constabulary has responded to HMIC inspection findings by stopping the issuing of warning letters for harassment, for example. All domestic abuse cases are reviewed at daily management meetings, and repeat victims are referred to a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC). Perpetrators of domestic abuse are also included in the group of offenders under the constabulary's integrated offender management programme.

## Recommendations

- Within six months, Derbyshire Constabulary should ensure that there are methods in place systematically to:
  - (a) review and evaluate the benefits from both current tactics and new crime fighting and anti-social behaviour initiatives;
  - (b) capture learning and good practice in crime prevention and local problem solving; and
  - (c) share learning and good practice across the constabulary and with partners.

## Summary



Good

- The constabulary has a victim-centred approach and a strong focus on ensuring that the most vulnerable victims receive a joined-up service from all agencies. HMIC found good evidence of frontline staff working with partners to find ways to divert offenders and prevent crime.
- Crime in Derbyshire has reduced by 21 percent reduction over the last four years, which is a greater reduction than the figure for England and Wales. The constabulary works well with partners across Derbyshire in using a range of tactics to prevent crime and reduce re-offending.
- HMIC found that the constabulary's ability to measure the impact of its activities is limited. The constabulary has recognised this and is starting to develop better ways to evaluate activities.
- Derbyshire Constabulary has an effective strategic threat and risk assessment that helps to meet the needs of the community by prioritising resource where it is needed most.

# How effective is the force at investigating offending?

HMIC looked at the range of police tactics and powers used by the constabulary to investigate offending, including how investigations are conducted, whether persistent offenders are diverted from crime and how people vulnerable to repeat crime are supported. We looked at how the constabulary learns from experience in order to improve professionalism in operational practice and leadership.

## Vulnerability, risk and victims

HMIC found that the leadership of the constabulary places a strong emphasis on the importance of focusing on victims and the need to protect those most at risk. The constabulary has taken effective steps to ensure that those vulnerable members of the community, whose circumstances make them the most susceptible to becoming victims of crime or anti-social behaviour, are identified and that special steps are taken to ensure that they get the level of service they need. There are specific officers in each of the three policing divisions with responsibility for dealing with people susceptible to harm. The new partnership information sharing database also includes a joint risk assessment to help identify and deal with the needs of vulnerable individuals. Officers have received training on the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and now put in place victim contracts to agree how and when victims will receive information about their case.

## Investigation

The constabulary has a very strong focus on improving the quality of investigations. The local criminal justice board, chaired by the chief constable, brings together the courts, the Crown Prosecution Service and partners to oversee the outcome of police investigations. It has established a number of partnership groups to tackle offending and support victims. The prosecution team performance meeting provides leadership and scrutiny for investigations and examines the reasons why some cases fail to reach a successful result. A number of cases are sampled each month and reviewed in-depth by the constabulary. The improving the quality of investigations board, provides a focus on quality, decision making, and accreditation of investigators. Both these meetings are chaired by an assistant chief constable. There is particularly robust scrutiny of all cases involving serious sexual offences which are examined by a multi-agency rape scrutiny panel. This not only reviews the case file but also hears from the officer in charge of the case about the needs of the victim.



There have been recent improvements in training for officers. A mid-service refresher training session for officers who have been in the service for a number of years has been introduced. It focuses on the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and on improving investigative skills. Officers are required to produce an investigation strategy for each crime or incident they attend. This is reviewed by their supervisors and aims to ensure that all opportunities to gather evidence are taken and that a successful investigation is carried out. This approach, alongside the victim contract, is monitored by supervisors who provide clear expectations for officers to follow. However, HMIC found some evidence of inconsistencies in recording the investigation strategies. The file reviews carried out as part of the inspection showed the standard of investigations is good; positive action is always taken, powers of arrest are used appropriately and supervision is good. We found some areas of concern around the quality of the initial investigations, and investigation strategies are not always recorded.

## Tackling repeat and prolific offenders

The constabulary has strong partnership arrangements in place for managing the most prolific offenders who pose a risk to the public. It recognises that preventing re-offending requires a joined-up approach from all partners locally. This integrated offender management (IOM) approach<sup>1</sup> is led by a strategic improvement group of partners and is chaired by the head of community safety from Derbyshire County Council. In addition to the police and local authorities, it also involves the probation service and the prison service. As of July 2014 there are 502 offenders being managed through this approach. Derbyshire Constabulary had 198 prolific offenders<sup>2</sup> as of 31 July 2014. Dealing with organised crime groups is a priority for the constabulary. There is a rigorous approach to identifying and closely monitoring activity and using intelligence to disrupt their criminal activities. This involves both teams of specialist detectives as well as the neighbourhood teams. Derbyshire Constabulary benefits from the strength of their collaborative arrangements as part of the East Midlands Special Operations Unit when tackling serious and organised crime.

<sup>1</sup> There is no standard national definition of who should be considered for Integrated Offender Management. Derbyshire Constabulary use the Offender Group Reconviction Scale.

<sup>2</sup> A prolific and priority offender (PPO) is any individual aged 18 years or over where suitable graded intelligence information exists to support that such an individual is committing target offences which are having a significant impact upon law and order, or their behaviour is having an adverse impact on local community life.

## Learning from experience

HMIC found a mixed picture around the constabulary's approach to learning. There is some excellent work going on through the various scrutiny groups set up to review the quality of investigations, which is driving improvements in service and outcomes for victims. However, there is limited current activity within the constabulary to evaluate the success of crime fighting and crime prevention tactics. The constabulary is aware that it needs to do more to understand what works and share learning and good practice, and it is starting to explore an evidence-based policing approach.

However we found little evidence of any meaningful measurement or evaluation of the effectiveness of the various tactics and activities in preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour. Systems for capturing learning from problem solving on neighbourhoods are limited. There is no central database to record activities being carried out in neighbourhood teams. This means that the constabulary may be missing opportunities to share learning and good practice and may be repeating mistakes.

### Summary

**Good**

- Derbyshire has a strong focus on providing a good service to victims, particularly on identifying the most vulnerable and ensuring the risks to them are properly understood and addressed by both police and partners.
- HMIC found some excellent work going on to scrutinise investigations, to understand the reasons why some fail to result in convictions and improve the quality and outcomes of future investigations. However the constabulary needs to do more to learn from what works in crime fighting and crime prevention tactics.
- The constabulary is working well in identifying and tackling the most prolific offenders through a joined-up approach with partners, working with those causing the greatest risk to the public to prevent them from re-offending.

# How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

HMIC looked at how the constabulary prevents and tackles anti-social behaviour; in particular the way victims are treated. We looked at the quality and consistency of victim contact across the constabulary and whether victims of anti-social behaviour were dealt with in a comparable way to victims of other crimes.

## Community contact and victim care

Derbyshire Constabulary remains committed to the value of safer neighbourhood teams (SNTs) and despite severe financial constraints over recent years has protected neighbourhood teams as far as possible from cuts. Each SNT has a good understanding of its local community concerns and priorities. These teams engage well with local people through local forums, where issues are discussed and actions agreed and followed up.

HMIC found that the constabulary leadership's focus on protecting the most vulnerable is well understood by neighbourhood officers. There is a dedicated officer on each division with responsibility for people who are susceptible to harm. This serves both to reinforce the focus, as well as to ensure that those who are at particular risk of becoming a victim or a repeat victim of anti-social behaviour are identified and, importantly, receive an appropriate level of service from the police and partners.

The constabulary is in the process of implementing fully a new system for managing anti-social behaviour cases, known as empowering communities inclusion and neighbourhood system (ECINs), within each of the SNTs. It enables better sharing of information with partners and ensures a joint risk assessment of all victims.

## Partnership working

HMIC found that community safety partnerships are strong, with officers working in both police and local authorities being jointly funded. There are eight anti-social behaviour coordinators across the area and four partnership sergeants, all located at council offices. This means that information is shared and local action to resolve problems can be jointly undertaken with partners. We also found good partner involvement in dealing with troubled families.

## Improving services to the public

There has been a reduction in the incidence of anti-social behaviour in Derbyshire over the last year. It has consequently not been selected as one of the top priorities for policing in Derbyshire although the anti-social behaviour incident rate, in the 12 months to March 2014, is higher than the figure for England and Wales.

In the 12 months to March 2014, Derbyshire Constabulary recorded 46,766 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is a reduction of 7 percent against the previous 12 months.

There are a wide range of tactics used by the constabulary, many in conjunction with partner organisations, to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour. We found some good examples of activities to divert young people away from anti-social behaviour such as Ozbox, a boxing-based fitness scheme. The constabulary uses a range of sanctions for example, letters to parents and formal warnings to young problem drivers. There is a good understanding among neighbourhood officers of the scale of local concerns and the importance of their role in tackling anti-social behaviour. The constabulary is in the process of rolling out face-to-face training for all neighbourhood staff in the new police anti-social behaviour powers.

Neighbourhood officers stated that they were unclear on the methods for recording or investigating anti-social behaviour and the system appeared to be improvised as needed. HMIC recognise that the constabulary is in the process of introducing a new improved database on which to share information at neighbourhood level with partners. This is previously commented upon in Partnership working and information sharing on page 13.

## Summary



Good

- Derbyshire Constabulary shows a strong commitment to neighbourhood policing and the safer neighbourhood teams have a good understanding of local concerns and priorities.
- Neighbourhood officers work well with local people in tackling anti-social behaviour and are committed to ensuring the most vulnerable in their communities are protected.
- Partnership working for tackling anti-social behaviour is strong and constructive. The police work well with local authority partners in understanding local anti-social behaviour concerns and finding creative solutions.
- HMIC found that the constabulary needs to do more to understand what works in tackling anti-social behaviour locally and share this widely so that all can learn from good practice.

# What each judgment means

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HMIC uses four categories for making judgments, two are positive and two are negative. The categories are:

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

Judgment is made against how well the force cuts crime. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the way the constabulary is cutting crime and reducing offending is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the constabulary requires improvement in the way it cuts crime, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the constabulary's effectiveness at cutting crime is inadequate because it is significantly lower than is expected.