

NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS INSPECTIONS OF NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

Inspection title	State of Policing 2025
Type of inspection	<input type="checkbox"/> Northumbria-specific <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Thematic
Date inspection published	10 th September 2025
Deadline for PCC response (56 days)	5 th November 2025
Recommendations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Local (No direct recommendations)

NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS

I welcome the State of Policing report 2025, which provides a comprehensive assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of policing in England and Wales, based on the inspections carried out between 1st April 2024 and 31st July 2025. The report highlights various areas of policing that are in vital need of improvement.

The disorder experienced during the Summer of 2024 presented significant challenges for forces across the country with local officers facing higher levels of risk on a daily basis particularly in Sunderland. I would like to thank the inspectorate for recognising the additional pressures faced by officers during this time. We continue to feel increased tension and witness the ongoing impact within communities today and hope that further incidents will be avoided.

Northumbria welcomes the focus on Neighbourhood Policing, announced by the government as part of its 'Plan for Change', as this will allow us to better engage with and support the communities we serve. Policing should not be a one size fits all approach and the NPG will ensure that interventions to tackle crime and ASB are relevant to the issues experienced at a local level. In our most recent PEEL inspection, 'preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability' (which includes neighbourhood policing) Northumbria was rated as 'Good'. This provides the public with reassurance in relation to its ability to deliver in relation to the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

The Governments' 'Plan for Change' contained its' Safer Street ambitions to halve knife crime and halve violence against women and girls (VAWG) within a decade. To support this, the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee was announced to provide 13,000 additional police officers, PCSOs and special constables into neighbourhood policing roles. Having a visible police presence in communities will help provide deterrence, prevent crime and improve public confidence. Northumbria previously benefitted from funding through Safer Streets, and continues to receive Hotspot Action funding, which has enabled the force and partners to deliver uniformed patrols. We have seen the benefits of this approach through reductions in crime and ASB as well as positive engagement with the public and businesses. Although some of this work is delivered through Business as Usual, the additional funding we receive is vital to ensure we are able to deliver, to the level that is required to sustain this progress. We are currently awaiting an announcement on any future funding to support this work.

There is a huge amount of work being delivered locally which supports the governments' Safer Streets mission however, I would like to highlight a few examples of the good work being undertaken within Northumbria:

Violence Against Women and Girls



- Raneem's Law - Northumbria was one of 5 forces selected nationally to trial the initiative on a funded basis. This specific approach that enables direct support and training to control room staff is a renewed and additional approach and is in addition to our existing IDVA service. Early indications show good uptake of communication staff training, enhanced data sharing between police and partners and key learning from other force approaches.
- Domestic Abuse Investigation Focus – The force currently has a positive outcome rate of 15% which is an increase on the previous 12-month period. The force has seen a slight increase in the conviction rate compared to the previous period and sit above national average in its report to conviction rate. The force has also seen an increase in the use of Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPN's) and an increase in Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO's) granted at court. The force sits well below national average for MARAC repeat rate and has continued the reduction for the second year in a row and now sit at 26% compared to 31% nationally. Victim satisfaction for DA remains high at 88% which is an increase from the previous 12-month period.
- VAWG Top 25 – The force will be adopting a 'top 25' of VAWG offenders to enable tasking and targeting of those highest harm offenders and to complement existing force wide perpetrator focussed initiatives.

Halving Knife Crime

- Reductions in Violent Offences - In Northumbria, serious violence has reduced by 4% in the latest 12-month period, mainly in relation to assaults with injury, assaults with intent to cause serious harm and threats to kill crimes. We have also seen a significant reduction in knife enabled serious violence, down 9% on the previous 12 month period.
- Hotspot Action Fund – Northumbria was originally a trailblazer force for the Hotspot Action Fund, known locally as Project Shield. As well as delivering enhanced uniformed patrols, we have funded POP training for 20 participants, to ensure that partners are able to come together to develop their localised plans, receive professional support and guidance whilst developing long term skills which can be taken forward.
- Trainee Detective Programme – This ground-breaking preventative initiative was developed by Northumbria Police in partnership with my Violence Reduction Unit. The programme was highlighted in the force PEEL Inspection as 'Innovative Practice'. Young people attending the course are immersed in a simulated investigation based on the 2019 murder of Sunderland teenager, Connor Brown. This initiative is supported by Connor's parents who deliver part of the course along with police and staff from other agencies.

Restoring public confidence and regaining the public's trust remains a key priority for policing across the country and I am therefore pleased to see that the decline in confidence appears to be tailing off. Northumbria Police has implemented a range of changes in recent years to strengthen and improve various key areas of the service. In particular, the force has made distinct improvements in answering 999 emergency calls promptly and has reduced the time it takes to respond to emergency incidents. The force has also developed a new engagement plan to ensure that it is engaging well with communities across the force in the most effective ways.

When someone experiences crime, or anti-social behaviour, I want to ensure the victims can have confidence in the police's ability to support them in achieving justice. In the Summer of 2023, the force implemented a victim satisfaction improvement plan, as a result of which, we are seeing improved victim satisfaction rates across all areas.



Ensuring victims are at the heart of everything we do has always been a key priority of Northumbria's PCCs and I continue to support this. We have now launched our 'Supporting Victims Fund', and despite no formal confirmation of our future funding amounts or duration, I am committing to funding successful victim's services for the next 3 years, providing stability to ensure victims are able to access appropriate support when they need it.

The force has made significant efforts to improve its performance in relation to bringing offenders to justice. I am pleased to be able to highlight the positive progress that has been made with the force positive outcome rate now sitting well above the national average at 18.3% (June 2025). In Northumbria, we recognise that people who commit crime are often in need of support to help divert them from this behaviour. We have therefore increased the use of Out of Court Disposals to provide offenders with the opportunity to engage in behaviour change interventions, reserving more formal court routes for the most serious and prolific offenders. Whilst there has been notable achievement with these outcomes, we are not complacent and will continue to build on this progress.

I am pleased that the Inspectorate continues to recognise the range of roles needed within policing and that the current officer number target and financial challenges impose constraints on forces. It is disappointing to read that the previous recommendation to abolish this hasn't been implemented to date. I would encourage that this is reviewed to allow the recruitment of staff who have the specialist skills needed within modern policing.

I will continue to monitor Northumbria Police against key national policing challenges and priorities through my scrutiny process.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Dungworth

Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria