

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

Strategic Equality Plan
Annual Report 2019/20

1. Introduction

In April 2016, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Gwent Police published the Joint Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) to help fulfil our duties as public authorities, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The SEP introduced the five Equality Objectives for the four-year period 2016 to 2020 that were determined in consultation with our staff and communities. To help us deliver these Objectives, we have organisational Action Plans that enable us to keep track of our progress and form the basis of this report.

During 2019/20, the OPCC has continued to work towards the delivery of the Equality Objectives. Whilst this Annual Report provides an update on our progress and helps us meet our duties under the Equality Act 2010, it also enables us to celebrate success in working towards a fair and inclusive police service. Previous Annual Reports for the current SEP have been produced as joint publications between the OPCC and Gwent Police. However, in 2019/20, a decision was made to publish separate documents, enabling a greater focus on each organisation's progress.

This is the final report for the current SEP and a new Plan is being developed for 2020-24. A number of activities will be rolled over into the new Plan to ensure continuity of delivery; others will require further work for us to demonstrate success which will be indicated within this document. It is recommended that this report be read in conjunction with Gwent Police's Equality Annual Report for 2019/20.

Note – the term 'protected characteristics' used in this document refers to the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion, pregnancy and maternity, and sex.

2. Our Equality Objectives

The overarching aim of our Equality Objectives is to ensure that we embed the principles of equality through all aspects of our day-to-day business, namely:

- Engaged Communities – delivering services that are easy to access and that respond to and meet the needs of all communities
- Employer of Choice – building a working environment that includes everyone and encourages all personnel to develop and progress
- A Service that Works – building equality into the organisation processes and how performance is managed

Work to meet our Equality Objectives reflects the five priorities set out in the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021:

- Crime Prevention
- Supporting Victims
- Community Cohesion
- Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour
- Effective Service Delivery

In particular, it supports the delivery of work relating to community cohesion:

- Obtaining the views of all communities on policing and crime matters and ensuring the services provided meet the diverse needs of our communities
- Ensuring a commitment to equality and diversity which promotes respect and cohesion through engagement with our communities and which supports an environment where crime and disorder are not tolerated
- Gwent Police and the OPCC have healthy, value led workforces that truly represent the communities they serve
- Working with our communities to minimise the effect of organised crime and reduce radicalisation and the growth of extremism.

Our commitment to equality is integral to the OPCC's values, which act as a central pillar to everything we do.

We will act with:

- Openness – through being accountable (internally and externally), informative, accessible and engaging
- Empathy – through caring, listening, understanding and being responsive
- Integrity – through being honest, trustworthy, professional and fair

We will:

- Empower – by creating an environment which supports staff and communities to make decisions and achieve outcomes
- Innovate – by creating an environment where innovation thrives both individually and together

OPCC staff are committed to working within the Code of Ethics and the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

We work within the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. The Act has seven well-being goals that link to the SEP and strengthen our work to tackle inequality, promote cohesion and support the health and well-being of our staff and those that come into contact with us, particularly those with vulnerabilities or additional support needs linked to their protected characteristics:



During the year, we have been working with Gwent Police to develop and implement a robust and effective Organisational Performance Framework and reporting structure. Work associated with the framework and the SEP will enable us to better identify and understand how Gwent Police is recording protected characteristics across all crimes and types of victimisation, and the service provided to individuals from those communities, as well as internally for workforce representation, allowing us to make recommendations for improved practices where applicable.

3. Updates on our Equality Objectives

Equality Objective One: Hate Crime and Domestic Abuse

To identify abuse and harassment where it impacts on communities and individuals, and act effectively to prevent and challenge this behaviour, as well as bringing offenders to justice.

A. Domestic Abuse

One of the commitments in our SEP was to improve the reporting and recording rates of incidents of domestic abuse specifically affecting people that share protected characteristics. When setting our Equality Objectives in 2016, we identified that Gwent had low levels of victims who were from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background, people that identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGB&T) and disabled people being discussed at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) which manage high risk domestic abuse cases. This was compared to recommended numbers for Gwent provided by SafeLives, the independent domestic abuse charity.

The following table compares the number of MARAC referrals for the reporting period against the recommended numbers:

Referrals	2018/19	2019/20	Recommended
<i>BAME</i>	6.5%	3.5%	6.0%
<i>LGB&T</i>	0.5%	0.9%	2.5% - 5/0%
<i>Disability</i>	3.3%	1.8%	18%+
<i>Male</i>	4.6%	4.3%	5% - 10%

During the year, we worked with Gwent Police to support improved compliance with the recording of MARAC data, in accordance with feedback from HMICFRS. There will be a continued focus on ensuring that the data recorded enables effective support for survivors of domestic abuse and a better understanding of their needs to support OPCC commissioning processes. This will be monitored at internal meetings and through engagement with victims and survivors.

Gwent Police data is also available for non-MARAC cases by gender and ethnicity. This shows that around 16% of domestic abuse cases do not record the victim's ethnicity, and around 0.4% do not capture the individual's gender. This is an

improvement from 2018/19, where 27% of the victim's ethnicity and 8.6% of victim's gender had not been recorded.

We will continue to work with Gwent Police and partners during 2020/21 to address the decrease in reported incidents and improve the recording of demographic information for domestic abuse survivors to ensure a more accurate representation for recorded cases. The new SEP will provide a focus on improving the quality of data being recorded to supported targeted information campaigns to encourage greater reporting from communities that are currently under-represented across recorded incidents.

We had also identified specific concerns relating to asylum seeking and refugee women who may have less access to support services, and who are less likely to report domestic abuse incidents due to language or cultural barriers, or a fear of the police. Working with partners, we raised awareness of the role of the police to encourage vulnerable individuals to report their experiences, either directly or through a support agency. This partnership work will continue into 2020/21, particularly as relates to the OPCC's commissioning and evaluation of support services for domestic abuse and sexual violence and our engagement with victims and survivors from these communities.

Following a recommendation from the OPCC in December 2019, we were pleased to support the appointment of Gwent Police's Survivor Engagement Coordinator, the first of its kind for Wales. The post will establish a sustainable survivor engagement framework, through which survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence can share their lived experience. Based within Connect Gwent, our multi-agency victim's hub, the Coordinator will enhance our existing service provisions by helping to ensure that we are delivering effective and inclusive support to victims.

During February, an invitation was sent out across our communities for people to share their experiences and improve the services we currently offer. The first focus group was held in March with a series of sessions planned over the following months. A range of topics were suggested including victim's expectations, the service and information received, being kept informed, and whether the support required was received. Due to the impact of Covid, the focus group work was moved to a virtual setting to ensure the safety of those involved. The outcomes of this activity will be shared at the appropriate internal meetings during 2020/21 where we will be able to monitor engagement activity across protected characteristics to ensure an inclusive approach.

In late 2019/20, we successfully secured Home Office funding for a Children's, Mental Health and Community Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA). This role, which will commence in 2020/21, will enhance the current levels of service available and enable targeted work with under-represented groups with the outcomes monitored at the appropriate internal meetings.

The OPCC currently contributes to the funding of Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) and sexual assault support services in Gwent. Improved monitoring of service user demographics is being implemented to ensure that the services

provided are appropriate for and inclusive of all communities. During 2019/20, services supported:

- 3,307 survivors of domestic abuse - 86.5% identified as female, 12.9% male, and 0.1% as non-binary; 4.5% stated they were gay/lesbian and 4.4% bisexual; 22.7% were aged 17 years and under; 8.1% identified as BAME; 17.1% were identified as disabled.
- 573 survivors of sexual violence – 96.1% identified as female, and 3.8% male; 2.9% were aged 17 and under; no sexual orientation, ethnicity or disability information was recorded.

Both services recorded significant increases in access compared to the previous year, including more male victims reporting their experiences. We recognise this positive outcome shows greater public confidence to engage with support, resulting from our continued focus on providing effective services and engagement and awareness-raising to encourage reporting. Our work will continue to recognise that these issues remain gender-related with under-reporting persisting across all genders, further affected by intersectionality of protected characteristics such as race or ethnicity, and disability.

At a strategic level, the OPCC is an active member of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Partnership Board and associated Delivery Group, which delivers a Strategic Delivery Plan. Priority Four of the Plan aims to ensure that our work in relation to VAWDASV is inclusive of all our communities.

Specific work undertaken during the year includes:

- Supporting the development of a male victim support group – OPCC staff have engaged with meetings of the male survivor group to improve our understanding of their experiences and where service improvements are required
- Exploring the needs of female perpetrators and those who do not fit in standard services – working with Gwent Police, we have begun to identify related data with the aim working with partners to determine the requirements for effective perpetrator support services under the Service Standards
- Implementing the Perpetrator Service Standards and development of ongoing quality assurance processes – we continue to support VAWDASV partners in implementing the Service Standards and are working towards developing an understanding of service needs
- Reviewing of data reporting requirements to support effective data provision and monitoring – we are working with the VAWDASV Partnership Board to review the various data reporting requirements on services, including those imposed by OPCC contractual arrangements on commissioned services. This will reduce the resource implications and streamline data production whilst remaining compliant with reporting requirements.

In March 2019, Operation Encompass went live across the five local authority areas in Gwent. Overseen by the Early Action Together Project Board (part of Gwent's work

within the all-Wales Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) programme), of which the Commissioner is a member, Operation Encompass provides further support and interventions within the educational environment for children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. During 2019/20, Gwent Police identified and enabled support for over 6,000 children and young people linked to the initiative. 33% of these individuals experienced more than one incident. Approximately 38% of those supported identified with BAME backgrounds. In attending incidents where there are BAME victims, provided the application of risk identification processes is correct, we would anticipate a positive reflection in the MARAC data over time. Therefore, the MARAC data for BAME victims may be more positive than is represented in the data within this report - we will monitor this over time and provide feedback on any continuing under-representation to understand the causes.

During the year, we worked with the Early Action Together Delivery Team to produce a video to showcase the difference the programme has made to the lives and experiences of police officers and people in Gwent as well as the future plans for the project¹, including:

- Delivering ACETIME training to over 1,000 Gwent Police officer and staff (including the OPCC) and 300 staff from partner agencies
- Running Public Protection Notice workshops for over 200 officers to improve the quality of information provided by officers
- Introducing a Safeguarding Social Worker to the Force Control Room to provide 'live' time advice, guidance and support to improve responses to vulnerability and safeguarding
- Implementing two Early Intervention Projects in Newport and Blaenau Gwent
- Rolling out Operation Encompass across Gwent
- Introducing the 'Backup Buddy', an online Well-being app for officers, staff and families, a first for policing in Wales.

The ACEs programme will provide a robust evidence base for better ways of working to improve our early identification, responses and support to vulnerable individuals. We will continue to collaborate with partners to further develop the programme, including aligning ACEs to the Policing Education Qualification Framework and Public Protection Learning Programme.

Towards the end of the reporting period, the UK entered into a state of lockdown in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This raised multiple concerns around increased risks of domestic abuse for those staying at home during the lockdown period, as well as limited or removal of access to criminal justice processes for vulnerable people. The OPCC worked with VAWDASV partners to develop a public campaign encouraging anyone at risk or experiencing abuse to report it. This was promoted across all our communication channels including the OPCC's weekly newsletter. We are monitoring the impact of lockdown along with relevant criminal justice and victim service partners and will focus on management and recovery at Gwent Criminal Justice Strategy Board meetings, chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ba3hPMq3d4>

Honour Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage

Our SEP focused on the need to increase reports and identification of incidents of Honour Based Violence (HBV), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage (FM), which are nationally under-reported. Gwent Police conducts a quarterly scrutiny review of HBV, FM and FGM cases to ensure improvements can be made to current service provision.

During 2019/20, Gwent Police recorded four incidents relating to FM (an increase of 50% on the previous year) and 30 incidents relating to HBV (an increase from 16 for the previous year). In addition, one report of FGM was received; however, we recognise that this type of crime is under-reported. We will continue to work with partners to raise awareness in communities and encourage reporting by or on behalf of individuals at risk and monitor the outcomes through our partnerships and the number of reports received by Gwent Police.

In July 2019, we supported BAWSO's event in Newport to commemorate victims of HBV. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner spoke at the event and provided an overview of the work being undertaken by the OPCC and Gwent Police to tackle HBV, FGM and FM.

B. Hate Crime

This year we have seen a reduction in the number of hate crimes recorded in Gwent, in common with other policing areas in the UK. Reporting continues to be affected by national and global events, such as terror attacks, and political and economic instabilities, which can produce short-term increases or reductions in recorded incidents. Towards the end of the reporting period, the number of hate crimes recorded fell dramatically due to the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown. This has contributed to the reduction recorded for the year.

The following table compares recorded hate crimes by strand for the last two years.

	2018/19	Proportion	2019/20	Proportion
<i>Racial</i>	481	61.1%	448	61.0%
<i>Homophobic</i>	156	19.8%	161	21.9%
<i>Disability</i>	109	13.8%	109	14.9%
<i>Religious</i>	21	2.7%	7	1.0%
<i>Transphobic</i>	20	2.5%	9	1.2%
Total	787		734	

While it is encouraging to see increases in the proportion of reports for homophobic and disability-related incidents, the decreases for religious and transphobic incidents are disappointing. In addition to the effects previously mentioned, we are aware that religious incidents are sometimes categorised as racial, which will affect the accuracy of the data. While no specific impacts on the number of transphobic reports were

identified, it is possible that the start of the lockdown period and people staying safe at home may have contributed to the reduction.

During 2019/20, around 90% of hate crime victims were referred into specialist services via Connect Gwent², as well as receiving support from Gwent Police's Hate Crime Support Officers. Gwent Police has also linked its hate crime referral processes to other specialist areas across the force, as the vulnerabilities that often affect hate crime victims could also put them at risk of other forms of exploitation and abuse. During the year, satisfaction for victims of hate crime stood at 70%; whilst higher than that for victims of other crime types and anti-social behaviour (ASB), would like to see further improvement and will continue to monitor Gwent Police's response to hate crime, and the victim satisfaction survey process to ensure that victims received the service and support they need.

The internal Hate Crime Meeting, attended by the OPCC, scrutinises Gwent Police's performance in this area. We have recognised that current recording practices do not provide the most accurate picture of religiously motivated hate crime, or of hate crimes against Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, which are commonly recorded as racial hate crimes. This limits our understanding of the impact of these crimes on communities who may be reluctant to report incidents due to mistrust of the police or their wider experiences of social discrimination and prejudice, for example. We will continue to work with Gwent Police and partners to understand the causes of decreases in reporting and ensure that recording practices are effective. We are also involved with reviewing Gwent Police's hate crime case management processes, which will continue through 2020/21.

Throughout the year, the Commissioner and the OPCC have used social and traditional media to respond to incidents and provide messages of reassurance and social cohesion to our communities. During Hate Crime Awareness Week 2019, we supported the work by Gwent Police and partners to inform and educate the public as part of the hate crime awareness campaign and joined with them to celebrate some of the work done within our communities to build confidence and encourage reporting.

Since February 2020, we have been monitoring the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on hate crimes, especially those targeted towards the South East Asian community. Gwent Police's Diversity and Inclusion Team provides weekly updates to the OPCC which helps to inform our wider discussions with partners and communities. We have continued to engage with organisations and groups that support communities that are more likely to experience hate crimes. Under the new SEP, we will continue to work with them to raise awareness of what hate crime is, how to report it, the help and support available and to encourage them to report any experiences.

Externally, the OPCC is a member of the Welsh Government's Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board Cymru. This Board provides strategic oversight of key issues and enables us to influence all-Wales responses that may affect how we support our local communities. In addition, the Board feeds into the development of relevant Welsh Government strategies, such as the Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan

² www.connectgwent.org.uk

2017-2020. During the year, this positive contribution to Welsh strategy and policy development, and the Board's role in tackling hate crime was recognised by the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip, Jane Hutt.

We will continue to work with the Board to focus on issues such as hate crime prosecution rates and community tensions, as well as contributing to engagement work regarding the services in place to support victims to improve outcomes for all hate crime victims locally and across Wales.

Equality Objective Two: Legitimacy and Fairness

To ensure that policing activities, in particular stop and search and encounters involving use of force, are carried out in a way that is lawful, proportionate, non-discriminatory, and fosters positive relations between communities and the police

This objective focuses on ensuring that policing activities that have been identified as being particularly intrusive and are likely to impact disproportionately on people that share protected characteristics, such as stop and search, are subject to proper scrutiny, and communications with the public are improved in order to reassure and receive feedback.

A. Stop and Search

Stop and search remains an area of controversy that can stimulate mistrust and undermine community confidence in the police service when it is perceived to be implemented unfairly. It is likely to be the most confrontational encounter someone will ever have with the police. Not only are individuals detained in public, often in a place highly visible to onlookers, but they are then subjected to an intrusive procedure.

Many BAME and young people report feeling 'targeted' on multiple occasions with no outcome, and the negative impacts of what are often referred to as 'coercive tactics' on police relationships with communities are recognised nationally. The Independent Office of Police Complaints (formerly the Independent Police Complaints Commission) has described stop and search as 'probably the leading cause of tension between young people and the police'. When public confidence is compromised the police may be cut off from vital sources of community information because lower confidence leads to lower levels of public cooperation.

Stop and search is an area of operational activity held under close scrutiny by both the OPCC and Gwent Police. A number of internal and independent processes are in place to monitor the use of police powers locally. Working with Gwent Police, the OPCC ensures that any issues identified through these processes, or any concerns raised with us by our communities, are recognised and addressed.

In the summer of 2019, the Home Office announced a relaxation of restriction for the use of stop and search under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. A Section 60 enables police officers to stop and search people even if they don't have suspicions about them. If a senior officer believes incidents of serious violence will take place in a specific area, or that people will be carrying weapons, and

it is necessary to use these powers then they may put a Section 60 in place. To date, Section 60 powers have not been used in Gwent. However, should their use be considered at any time, we will work with Gwent Police to ensure that decision-making processes are evidence-based, transparent and promote public confidence.

Gwent Police is committed to being open and transparent regarding its use of stop and search stop and search, and data is published quarterly on its website³. Doing so helps to evidence legitimacy by practicing openness and transparency in the use of these powers. In line with national trends, the number of stop and searches in Gwent has increased over the last three years, rising from 974 person stop and searches (1145 total stops) in 2017/18, to 3142 person stops (3741 total stops) in 2019/20. No specific causes of this increase were identified. A breakdown of stop and search activity for 2019/20⁴ is shown on the following page.

Disproportionality rates in Gwent have also increased in line with the numbers of stop and searches recorded. For 2019/20, BAME people were 5.1 times more likely to be subject to stop and searches than White people. For the previous year, the likelihood was calculated at 4.7 times, compared to 4.3 times nationally⁵. Therefore, the disproportionality rate for stop and searches on BAME people in Gwent has increased. During the year, Gwent Police undertook a number of operational campaigns within the Newport area, which has our highest resident ethnic minority populations and therefore may have contributed to this increase. Recommendations from OPCC scrutiny work have included a need for Gwent Police to provide demographic information relating to operational activity to ensure an understanding of the impact of police operations on local communities, and to identify where any disproportionate activity has taken place. We are concerned that, to date, this information has been inconsistent, and we will continue to support Gwent Police in improving transparency in this area.

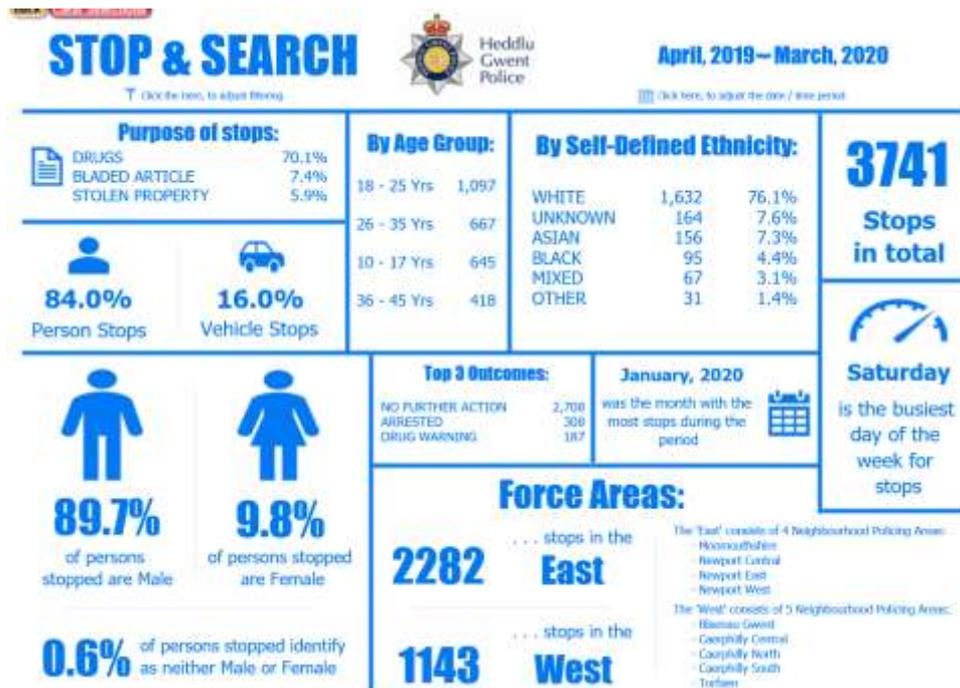
In 2019, Gwent Police implemented improved internal monitoring of stop and search to enable better understanding of its use and impacts on our communities. Supported by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the Stop and Search and Use of Force Performance Report provides detailed analysis of activity, which is monitored at the internal Operational Tactics Meeting, attended by the OPCC. The report has confirmed to a need for further work to understand the reasons for disproportionality in Gwent, consistent with the recommendations made by OPCC scrutiny processes. This work is planned for 2020/21.

National stop and search data will be published by the Home Office in October 2020. This will enable a better understanding of police use of powers across the UK and provide more up-to-date rates of proportionality of stop and searches. The OPCC will use this information to provide benchmarking and inform stop and search scrutiny and improvement processes.

³ <https://www.gwent.police.uk/en/about-us/your-right-to-information/stop-search/stop-search-data-statistics/>

⁴ Data correct as of 13/07/2020

⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/841408/police-powers-procedures-mar19-hosb2519.pdf



We continue to work with Gwent Police to engage with communities regarding why the police use stop and search, and people's rights if they are stopped. Feedback from public workshops run in 2019 demonstrated a number of challenges in terms of feeling and perceptions towards the police service. However, through regular engagement, we hope to provide valuable opportunities to better understand the reasons behind this, as well as fostering more positive relationships between young people, BAME communities and the police. Engagement with older BAME people to understand how their experiences and perceptions of policing affects younger generations is also planned. We will continue to share learning with Gwent Police to increase our collective understanding to better identify and implement where change is needed.

Use of Force

Use of force is an operational area that is experiencing an increase in scrutiny nationally. The Home Office publishes an annual data bulletin (last published in December 2019) that provides information on use of force across the police service in the UK⁶. However, the statistics do not represent all use of force in the 43 police forces in England and Wales and so does not provide a true picture of the impacts on communities and vulnerable individuals.

Nationally, in 2018/19:

- 16% of incidents involved Black people, the highest rate for BAME ethnicities
- 13% of incidents involved people where officers believed there to be a mental health disability
- 72% of incidents ended in arrest

⁶https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/853204/police-use-of-force-apr2018-mar2019-hosb3319.pdf

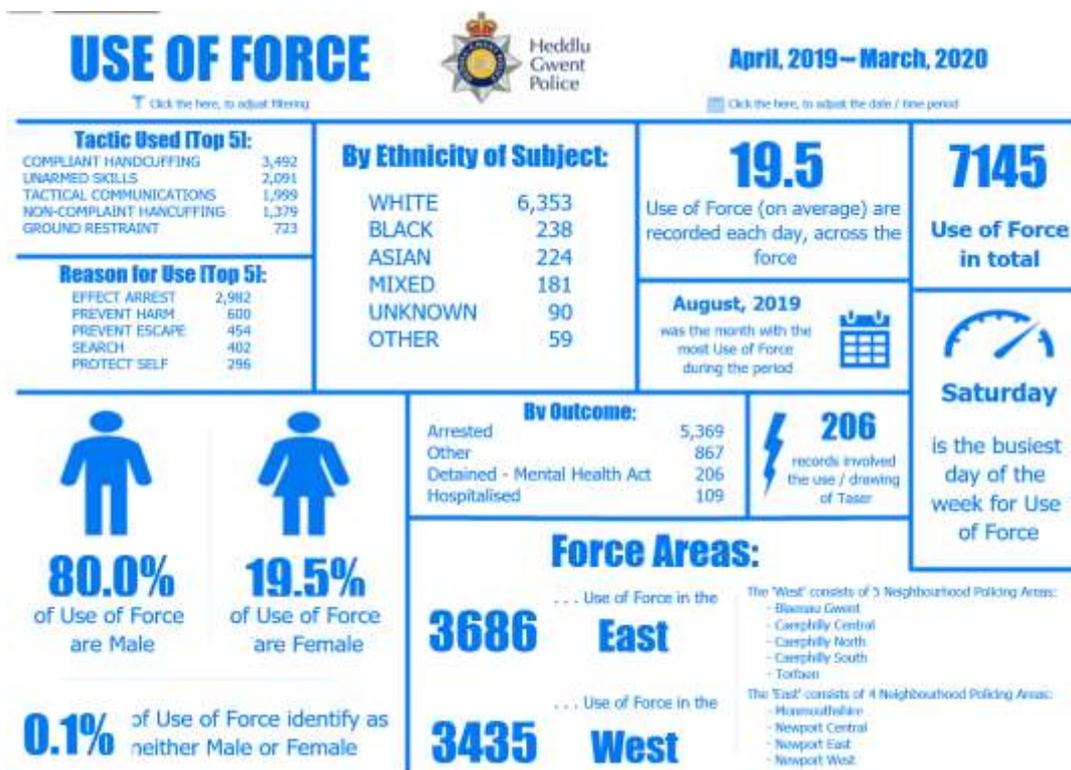
- Taser use occurred in 88% of incidences with Black, Asian or Mixed ethnicities, compared to 83% for White

We have been working with Gwent Police to ensure that where force is used, it is fair, proportionate and justified. Based on this, we have supported Gwent Police to make improvements to internal process through recommendations and regular attendance at the Operational Tactics Meeting. We will continue to support the development of internal governance to enable effective monitoring and oversight of use of force practices.

The following infographic provides a breakdown of use of force activity for 2019/20⁷. It should be noted that all subject details are recorded as perceived by the officer and is not as accurate as the information recorded for stop and search, which is provided by the subject of the encounter. In addition, the number of use of force reports will be greater than the number of people subject to use of force due to the reporting requirements in place.

Within Gwent:

- 3% of subjects were identified as either Black or Asian,
- 75% of incidences resulted in arrest
- 3% of incidences involved Taser
- 3% of individuals were detained under Section 136



⁷ Data correct as of 26/02/2020

National use of force data will be published by the Home Office in October 2020, enabling a better understanding of police use of powers across the UK, including rates of proportionality in use of force for people from BAME communities compared to those from White communities. Gwent Police and the OPCC will use this information to support use of force scrutiny and improvement processes, particularly in monitoring the impacts for particular protected characteristics such as race and those with vulnerabilities linked to mental health or disability.

OPCC Scrutiny

The OPCC maintains a longstanding process for the public scrutiny of local use of stop and search and use of force. In September 2017, this expanded to include use of force, such as Taser, handcuffing, use of PAVA spray, etc. The Legitimacy Scrutiny Panel (LSP) continues to be co-ordinated and facilitated by an OPCC Policy Officer, supported by Gwent Police's Head of Diversity and Inclusion. Membership is drawn from Gwent's Independent Advisory Group (IAG), local community members from across Gwent representing diverse backgrounds aligned to the protected characteristics.

The LSP meets on a quarterly basis, with scrutiny alternating between stop and search and use of force. Within the scrutiny process, the LSP:

- Considers and discusses Gwent Police stop and search and use of force data
- Conducts a review of all the BAME stop and search records available for the six-month scrutiny period, and a dip sample of the remaining records
- Reviews body worn video from a random selection of stop and search and use of force footage available (this includes video relating to complaints that have been dealt with by the police Professional Standards Department).

Reports detailing analysis of scrutiny sessions and any resulting recommendations for improvement, or examples of good practice, are provided to the Commissioner and Gwent Police's lead for Operational Tactics for follow-up. Reports are also published on the OPCC website⁸ and provided to the IAG for their consideration and feedback as appropriate.

During 2019/20, the LSP met four times as planned. For two of these meetings, we hosted representatives from HMICFRS, who had expressed an interest in observing the Panel to assist their wider understanding of Gwent's governance and scrutiny processes. This has supported both the OPCC and Gwent Police in the continuous improvement of internal monitoring arrangements, and we welcome further opportunities to work with HMICFRS as we continue to understand and address any issues of disproportionality that occur locally. LSP exercises identified a number of areas of continued challenge as well as improvement, which are consistent with HMICFRS inspections and Gwent Police's own internal reviews. These shaped the recommendations that were put forward in the LSP reports.

⁸ <https://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/en/transparency/know-your-rights/stop-and-search/>

For stop and search, key observations included the following –

- Data quality showed improvements generally, although some minor areas for improvement remain. Internal work is ongoing to resolve the remaining issues and we will continue to review progress during 2020/21.
- The vast majority of grounds were believed to be reasonable; however, there remains some uncertainty linked to grounds for cannabis-related stops and the national guidance provided to officers. This has been reflected back to the force for consideration linked to officer training and internal messaging and will continue to be monitored.
- Drugs remained the highest purpose for stop and search activity, reflecting national trends. This continues to be a priority area for scrutiny linked to grounds and outcomes for individuals.
- Individuals identifying with Asian ethnicities consistently experienced the highest rate of stop and searches for drugs across BAME groupings. LSP recommendations included feedback from Gwent Police on the reasons behind this. It is anticipated that the work planned for 2020/21 will provide this.
- Individuals identifying as Black experienced the highest arrest rate for drugs across BAME groupings. Again, LSP recommendations included feedback on the reasons behind this.
- Observations of body worn video were largely positive, and a number of examples of excellent engagement with subjects were noted. Positive feedback has been provided in such cases.

For use of force, key observations included the following –

- Form submission rates greatly increased during the year due to a force-wide focus on effective incident recording and entry. This was a positive outcome and one that we will continue to monitor in future scrutiny exercises.
- Some improvements relating to the accuracy of information and the number of forms provided by officers attending an incident remain, including ensuring all officers that use force on an individual during an incident submit a form to record their actions. This has been reflected back to the force for consideration linked to officer training and internal messaging and will continue to be monitored.
- Use of Section 136 of the Mental Health Act remains low, with people only taken to custody where they would endanger others if they were taken to hospital. This is a positive outcome that we will continue to monitor within the custody data.
- Individuals identifying with Asian ethnicities experienced the highest use of force across all BAME groupings. This reflects stop and search interactions in Gwent and is a matter that we are working with Gwent Police to better understand.
- For subjects aged under 18, those identifying as Black experienced the highest use of force compared to other ages groups and BAME ethnicities. The reasons for this are not clear so we will work with Gwent Police to better understand why and ensure that any identified improvements are effectively implemented.

- Observations of body worn video were very positive, with officers seen to experience some very challenging, and some cases dangerous, situations. Positive feedback has been provided in such cases.

In the early part of 2020, the OPCC undertook an audit of recommendations to establish progress against the findings of the LSP sessions. OPCC staff meet with the police lead for Operational Tactics to review the audit document. Feedback and update on progress will be provided to the OPCC in early 2020/21.

The LSP scrutiny process will continue to develop under the new SEP. We will review membership to ensure it reflects the communities most affected by stop and search in particular, while ensuring a responsive approach to existing and emerging issues.

We will continue to support Gwent Police as they undertake work to better understand issues of inequality in the use of police powers. This will enable us to ensure that our responses to matters of disproportionality are appropriate, transparent and foster trust and confidence within the communities most affected.

B. Custody

Our SEP included a number of actions specifically around improving the scrutiny of custody data that relates to people that share protected characteristics. Data reviews are regularly carried out to ensure that any evidence of disproportionality is identified and understood. The following table shows the ethnicities of people in police custody for the last four years. According to the latest available population data, this does not show any evidence of disproportionality.

	Financial Year			
<i>Self-Defined Ethnicity by Ethnic Group</i>	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
<i>White</i>	90.5%	88.6%	89.0%	90.4%
<i>Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups</i>	1.7%	2.2%	1.8%	1.6%
<i>Asian/Asian British</i>	3.1%	3.0%	3.4%	2.6%
<i>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British</i>	1.8%	2.4%	2.8%	2.9%
<i>Other Ethnic Group</i>	1.2%	1.4%	1.1%	1.5%
<i>Not Stated</i>	1.6%	2.4%	2.0%	1.0%
<i>Total Arrests</i>	9951	8327	9357	9152

Strip searching in custody is also monitored and audited for compliance.

Detentions under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act are captured on QlikView and regularly monitored at the internal Equality Meeting. 2019/20 saw a continued decrease in the numbers of people being taken to police custody as a place of safety.

	2016	2017	2018/19	2019/20
<i>% in custody</i>	26%	11%	4%	1.4%
<i>% in hospital</i>	74%	89%	96%	98.6%

We welcome the continued reduction in the use of custody for mental health detentions and acknowledge the partnership arrangements in place that have contributed to this outcome. The Criminal Justice Liaison Service has piloted the inclusion of a team of mental health practitioners in custody. The team will assess and assist detainees with poor mental health at this early point in the criminal justice process and potentially offer more appropriate alternative diversionary pathways away from the criminal justice route.

Data for all children detained in custody is available and monitored regularly by senior custody managers. During the year, the following numbers of children were recorded in custody:

Children in custody by ethnic group (2019/20)			
White	Black	Asian	Other
507	31	18	51

Gwent Police reports data to the Welsh Government on children in custody on a monthly basis. All cases where children have been detained post-charge are also reviewed individually. The OPCC also monitors Gwent Police custody data to ensure any issues of disproportionality are identified and understood.

Following an earlier HMCFRS inspection into child protection, an action plan to improve the way Gwent Police manage the detention of children was developed and has been monitored at the internal Operational Performance Board. The OPCC is represented at this meeting to ensure oversight of children in custody and provides support and challenge as appropriate.

The Gwent Transfer of Children from Police Custody Monitoring and Review Panel is a multi-agency meeting that retrospectively reviews all children and young people arrested and held in police custody between the hours of 11:59pm and 5:00am (considered as an “overnight” detention). A progress report is provided to the Gwent Criminal Justice Strategy Board annually for consideration and discussion, with recommendations and support for improvements provided as appropriate.

The following table shows the number of children arrested, by ethnicity.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
<i>Total Arrests</i>	9876	6923	7996	9152
<i>White</i>	93.0%	85.0%	89.21%	90.4%
<i>Asian</i>	3.50%	2.80%	3.21%	2.60%
<i>Black</i>	3.50%	3.30%	2.90%	2.90%
<i>Other</i>	-	-	2.89%	1.50%
<i>Mixed</i>	-	-	1.79%	1.40%
<i>Not Stated</i>				1.0%

While the total number of children in custody increased over the year compared to 2018/19, we are satisfied that the arrangements in place and the oversight provided by the Panel is well placed to identify and address any areas for improvement. We will continue to review partnership approaches to children in custody and ensure that any disproportionate impacts are effectively addressed.

The OPCC continues to co-ordinate an active Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme, using community volunteers to regularly attend custody units to review the quality of care provided to detainees. ICV volunteers receive regular training, including on equality and diversity matters, and the minutes of quarterly meetings are published on the OPCC website⁹ providing transparency and public reassurance of the effectiveness of the scheme

During 2019/20, 69 unannounced visits were made in total, resulting in:

- 62% of detainees in custody during visiting periods accepting a visit by the ICVs
- 100% of issues identified by ICVs being addressed by the custody sergeant at the time of visit.

Following the scheme's quality assurance framework assessment by the Independent Custody Visiting Association, our scheme retained its 'Code Compliant' status. Feedback from our ICV volunteers on the custody arrangements in place in Gwent is very positive. We will continue to ensure that the ICV Scheme is effective and contributes to community confidence regarding police custody.

C. Complaints

Until February 2020, the OPCC continued to host the Public Response Unit (PRU). From April 2019 to February 2020, it dealt with and resolved 238 cases of dissatisfactions, supporting the people of Gwent to get answers to areas of concern and preventing them from escalating into complaints. The PRU now sits within Gwent Police's Professional Standards Department (PSD).

The OPCC receives quarterly reports from Gwent Police's PSD to monitor performance and matters of concern. Areas reported on include appeals, allegations against officers and staff, conduct cases and their outcomes, and vetting.

Previous reports contained very little information relating to protected characteristics for complainants; however, monitoring information was much improved during 2019/20, covering ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability. Due to reporting delays, the information for 2019/20 was incomplete at the time of writing. However, the available data for April to December 2019, showed that the number of complaints received from individuals identifying as Black, Asian or 'Other' (the ethnicity categories provided) were low, with a greater number of complaints made by Asian individuals. Whilst the nature of the complaints made is not aligned to the ethnicity monitoring, the

⁹ <https://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/en/about-us/my-volunteers/independent-custody-visitor-icv-scheme/independent-custody-visiting-scheme-meeting-minutes/>

profile is comparable to that of operational policing activities, including stop and search, and detentions in custody.

For sexual orientation, the majority of complaints were made by individuals identifying as heterosexual, with a low number of complaints made by people identifying as Bisexual, Gay/Lesbian, or 'Other'.

Disability data was less complete than in the other categories, with a small number of individuals identifying with either poor mental health, a physical disability, a learning difficulty, or a sensory impairment.

In comparison with the data for 2018/19, it would appear that the demographic profiles for complainants will be similar across the two years; however, the year-end report provide a more accurate picture.

We recognise that some communities are less likely to make a complaint when they feel that they have been treated unfairly or discriminated against. We will continue to raise awareness of how to make a complaint to either Gwent Police or the OPCC and ensure that our complaints processes are accessible, efficient and transparent.

From quarter three in 2019/20, a range of protected characteristics linked to vetting decisions have also been included in PSD reports. Over time, this will enable us to monitor the demographics of applicants and assess the impact of the decisions made. Going forward, the Vetting Appeals Panel will review all cases where applicants with protected characteristics have failed the vetting process (whether they have submitted an appeal or not). The OPCC is a member of the Vetting Appeals Panel and we welcome these very positive developments within vetting processes.

Equality Objective Three: Access, Engagement and Cohesion

To ensure the delivery of our services is influenced by the views of people that share protected characteristics and that the work that we do promotes inclusivity and cohesion

A. Access

Police Estate

During the year, we have continued work to improve the accessibility of the policing services provided to communities that could experience barriers, as well as ensuring working environments are safe and accessible for all personnel. The Commissioner is responsible for the police estate in Gwent and has a 10-year Estate Strategy in place that sets out the vision, drivers for change and targets for improvements whilst recognising the current opportunities and limitations of modern policing. In delivering the Estate Strategy, the OPCC works closely with Gwent Police to provide a visible and accessible policing service that responds to local need and provides reassurance to the community.

Following an audit of the police estate in 2018/19, a number of recommendations were put forward within the Access Audit Reports, which were completed in 2019/20. As a result, a number of improvements were made across the estate, including reassignment of accessible parking, the provision of high-visibility pedestrian markings, and the provision of Welsh language information within the public areas of some police stations. The audit included assessment of the design of our new Headquarters.

The Estates Department has worked closely with Gwent Police's Diversity and Inclusion Team, the Staff Support Networks, and members of the IAG to ensure that the new Headquarters facility provides a workplace that encourages inclusivity to foster positive, respectful relationships between all our staff, and to inspire confidence in our communities that they will also be treated fairly and with dignity. Improvements to the existing estate and design considerations for the new build included:

- Ensuring a fully accessible environment that is responsive to the needs of physically disabled people and people with sensory impairments
- Provision of specific washing facilities for religious observation
- Inclusion of a contemplation room for religious observation or quiet reflection
- Development of gender-neutral toilet, washing and changing facilities throughout the building
- Provision of baby changing and breastmilk storage facilities
- Ensuring Welsh language requirements are met regarding signage provisions across the site.

As a result of this work, we hope will provide an environment that contributes to staff well-being and supports greater diversity across our policing workforce.

Access to Diversion Schemes

Building on the success of the previous Women's Pathfinder Diversion Scheme, in October 2019 the OPCC launched the Women's Pathfinder Whole System Approach (WSA). While the previous Women's Pathfinder was only available to women from the Newport area, the WSA programme operates across the whole Gwent Police area. The programme forms part of our commitment to supporting the Welsh Government's Female Offending Blueprint for Wales.

While a minority of female offenders in England and Wales are women, many are victims of crime themselves, often having experienced physical or emotional abuse. Involvement in the criminal justice system can have far-reaching and long-lasting effects on the women themselves, their families and the communities in which they live, with adverse impact on future generations. The Women's Pathfinder WSA provides inclusive support for women from arrest to the custody period post-release. It helps participants to understand their strengths, overcome barriers and take opportunities to allow them to move forward without further involvement in criminal behaviour.

Delivery of the Women's Pathfinder was split between two contracts across the year. In first six months of the WSA contract, 120 women were referred to the service for intervention, including 97 that transferred from the previous Women's Pathfinder service. The main source of referrals was from police custody, with other referrals made by the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS). This is a very positive outcome for the new service, helping women to counter the impact of ACEs on their own lives and reduce the likelihood of their children experiencing trauma.

At the same time, we were pleased to launch the Early Intervention Service for Young Adults aged 18-25. Aligned to the Welsh Government's Youth Justice Blueprint for Wales, the service intends to prevent young people from entering the criminal justice system, minimising their contact with it and maximising opportunities for diversion to support them to lead crime free lives. This age group represents the largest cohort of people engaged with Gwent Police and the Early Intervention Service provides a fantastic opportunity to make a significant difference to the lives of a number of these individuals.

Since October 2019, 154 young people have received intervention and support through the scheme. This is a significant outcome for the first six months of the programme, helping young adults avoid the barriers that a criminal record creates.

It has been recognised that performance information for the schemes should, as a minimum, monitor the ethnicity of participants, to ensure that opportunities for diversion are offered proportionately to those meeting the referral criteria. This will be included within work for 2020/21.

Keep Safe Cymru Scheme

In 2019, we continued to work with Gwent Police to implement the Keep Safe Scheme. The Gwent scheme was initially developed by the OPCC and Gwent Police along with Learning Disability Wales, local community groups and disabled people, and is aimed at vulnerable people and those with communication difficulties to support them to feel safe and comfortable when speaking to the police.

During the year, we worked with Gwent Police's Diversity and Inclusion Team to begin promoting the scheme to local community groups that support people with learning difficulties. Also, in collaboration with the Intervention and Prevention Department, we provided Keep Safe information alongside the Herbert Protocol, a national scheme for vulnerable people at risk of going missing as a result of dementia or other related conditions. However, due to personnel changes within the Diversity and Inclusion Team and, later, the impact of Covid-19, progress was limited with only 14 people signing up during the initial phase. During this time, we did not record any police contact by scheme members.

Plans are in place for 2020/21 to promote Keep Safe more widely across Gwent and we will continue to monitor usage over time and ensure the scheme works effectively.

Access to Victim Services and Support

During the year, the OPCC participated in work by the Ministry of Justice to explore, understand and improve support for BAME victims of crime. The workshop identified that the risk of victimisation is disproportionately higher for those from a BAME background, and BAME victims can be less likely to be aware of, or take up, support services than White victims. In particular, children and young people from BAME communities are more likely to be victims of crime, disproportionately experiencing issues such as serious violence and hate crime.

As a result, the Ministry of Justice intends to produce guidance to assist Commissioners in delivering and commissioning support services that meet local needs for victims in their area. The guidance will seek to support efforts to improve the effectiveness and engagement of victim support services with ethnic minority victims. There will be an expectation on Police and Crime Commissioners to clearly demonstrate how they have met the quality standards within the guidance, specifically around work to support BAME victims of crime. While we have made significant progress in improving the support available across our communities, we will need to clearly demonstrate our understanding of the needs of ethnic minority victims in Gwent when commissioning or reviewing support services.

The guidance is due to be launched in 2020/21. In the meantime, we have continued to work with service providers to review access to support by service users and raise awareness of the support available to under-represented communities. Our engagement with service users and communities will also help us to understand any barriers to access as well as identifying what has worked well for individuals that have received support. Stakeholder mapping work being undertaken by our Communications and Engagement Team will support targeted information campaigns and structured engagement activities linked to commissioning processes.

B. Engagement and Cohesion

Community cohesion plays a key role in the prevention and reduction of crime and ASB. A cohesive community is one that shares a greater sense of belonging, valuing and respecting the diversity of people's backgrounds; where those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, and where strong and positive relationships develop between people from different backgrounds, whether in the workplace, in schools and in neighbourhoods. Where cohesion is limited or undermined, crime and ASB are more likely to occur.

The OPCC, Gwent Police and partners continue to actively work together to create a Gwent that is integrated, cohesive and resilient. Underpinning this work is the Welsh Government's Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act and their vision for "a Wales of Cohesive Communities".

An integral part of our work towards community cohesion is engagement with communities, stakeholders and partners, aiming to build trust and confidence in public services to tackle the issues affecting community cohesion. In addition to hate crime,

mentioned earlier in this document, OPCC activities have supported a range of initiatives linked to engagement and cohesion.

Throughout the year, the OPCC has provided regular and consistent messaging linked to cohesion, hate crime, domestic abuse and community safety. We make extensive use of social and traditional media platforms as well as face-to-face engagement.

The Commissioner has also met with community and faith groups to discuss their concerns and ways to improve their communities' trust and confidence in and engagement with our policing services.

The Joint OPCC and Gwent Police Engagement and Communications Strategy, published in 2018, seeks to ensure continued effective engagement with members of the public including the vulnerable, victims of crime, community groups, citizens that are seldom heard, and other strategic partners. It also aims to ensure that all members of the community, as far as possible, have the opportunity to take part on engagement activities. The Strategy has had a positive impact on engagement outcomes for the OPCC during 2019/20, as highlighted in this report. We will continue to review Gwent Police's engagement activities under the Engagement and Communication objectives to assess the effectiveness of their strategies and campaigns and provide any recommendations for improvements where gaps are identified.

Police Community Fund

The Commissioner's Police Community Fund aims to enable children and young people in Gwent to be safe, healthy and happy. It does this by supporting projects that work with young people at risk of or involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Community and partnership working are central to the success of the Police Community Fund, with local police teams working at the heart of these community groups. In acting as the link between the OPCC, Gwent Police and the beneficiaries, the police teams provide us with an understanding of local issues to improve our knowledge when considering applications and offer support to the organisations in the application process and when delivering their projects. Equality, diversity and accessibility considerations are built-in to our decision-making processes, supporting our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

In 2019/20, eight organisations received funding, with a further two organisations awarded second year funding, subject to conditions. In total, almost £300 000 was awarded during the year. Projects and interventions supported include:

- The Sanctuary Project in Newport supports vulnerable children and young people who have been trafficked into the UK, or arrived seeking asylum, many of whom are vulnerable to exploitation from criminal gangs. The funding from the OPCC pays for a dedicated support worker to work with children and young adults, helping them to potentially avoid becoming involved with crime and to integrate with local residents.

- The Cymru Creations project in Blaenau Gwent has supported local children to work with an award-winning media company to create short films focusing on topics such as dangerous driving, anti-social behaviour and hate crime.
- The Maindee Youth 'School's Out' Project engages with young people from a range of ethnic backgrounds to offer activities that encourage participation, cohesion and support work to tackle cultural and community tensions. The funding enables equality of opportunity for individuals to participate in the activities offered by the project.

Children participating in these projects have achieved outcomes including improved health and wellbeing, increased feelings of safety, more positive relationships with others, and have been better able to make more informed life choices. They have also been supported away from crime and ASB.

Police Volunteers

We continue to support the Heddlu Bach/Mini Police programme which has continued to grow during 2019/20. In September 2019, the programme was hosted in 50 Primary schools across all five local authority areas in Gwent. Originally introduced by OPCC and Gwent Police in 2017, the programme also widened its diversity and inclusion in November 2019, launching in a Special Educational Needs school, and in January 2020, in the Berea Mosque welcomed a Heddlu Bach programme for young people in its community¹⁰.

These opportunities allow children and schools that join the programme to participate in tackling local issues. These are highlighted by the children, allowing them to take ownership of the activities whilst engaging with local Neighbourhood Policing Teams. In addition, the programme promotes and supports the young people to become ethically informed citizens of the future, while developing their understanding of the police and their community. This contributes to increased community cohesion by promoting confidence in Gwent Police and the principles of policing by consent, as well as increasing communication with the communities involved. During the year, 944 young people engaged with the programme, from at least 27 cultural backgrounds. 15 individuals have self-identified as disabled.

The Heddlu Bach initiative has added value to the already established Police Cadet programme, which has also seen an increase in participation by young people in our communities. The programme currently engages with 78 young people across Gwent. The Cadet programme¹¹ promotes a practical understanding of policing amongst all young people. It also aims to encourage good citizenship and support young people to become responsible, mature and considerate adults. Cadets are young members of the community, aged between 14 and 18, that are involved in a wide range of activities and events. As well as learning about police procedures and the law, cadets

¹⁰ <https://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/en/news/new-heddlu-bach-unit-in-blaina/>

¹¹ <https://www.gwent.police.uk/en/join-us/police-cadets/>

also play a vital role in community events, engaging with members of the public and educating them on crime prevention.

Independent Advisory Group

Gwent Police continues to co-ordinate the IAG, a voluntary group made up of members of the public that are independent from the police. The role of the IAG is to review and challenge policing practices in a constructive way, helping to improve policing services to the public.

The OPCC has developed a relationship with the IAG and regularly attends meetings to provide feedback on policing and OPCC activities. In addition to engaging with the IAG as part of the Legitimacy Scrutiny Panel, the OPCC welcomes members' involvement in its activities, providing additional community perspectives and support and challenge where appropriate.

During 2020/21, the OPCC will continue to work with the IAG and Gwent Police to further involve members in activities and influence the work of the OPCC, aligned to the IAG Action Plan. The IAG Action Plan will help to ensure that members are able to fully participate in the opportunities provided by their involvement, aligning their knowledge and expertise with the most appropriate area of police business.

The IAG is also involved with Gwent Police's Ethics Committee, a group that provides advice and/or guidance in relation to ethical dilemmas presented to the Committee. Other core members include police officers, staff and the OPCC. The advice provided by the Committee has been used to shape decision-making across a range of strategic and operational activities, or to provide reassurance that actions taken were appropriate at the time.

Youth Question Time

In March 2020, we hosted our second Youth Question Time event, held in partnership with the Gwent Regional Youth Forum. The annual event provides an opportunity for young people to question a panel of local key decision makers on a range of topics that are important to them. More than 100 young people attended, representing a diverse mix of cultures and backgrounds from across the five local authority areas.

The panel featured the Police and Crime Commissioner, Deputy Chief Constable for Gwent Police Amanda Blakeman, Dr Liz Gregory (joint head of the child and family psychology service in Gwent), Dr Jane Dicken (consultant in sexual and reproductive healthcare) and Loren Henry (founder of youth project Urban Circle). Topics raised included mental health, knife crime, domestic abuse, exploitation and cyber-crime.

We also offered attendees an opportunity to provide their views on the proposed joint OPCC and Gwent Police Equality Objectives for 2020-24. 30 young people provided their views on the Objectives and themed delivery areas as part of a voting exercise; eight additional paper responses were received following the event. Comments included:

- Male survivors of domestic abuse
- Experiences of stop and search
- Working and engaging with young people
- Gender equality
- Fair and transparent recruitment.

Feedback from participants on the opportunity to be involved in the consultation was very positive, with similar engagement in the future encouraged. The responses received have been used to support the development of the new Joint Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-24.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Engagement

We continue to work with partners to develop our understanding of the issues faced by our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities and the barriers to their engagement with public services.

The OPCC is a member of the Gwent Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Forum that has been established to foster greater engagement in GRT communities whilst developing an understanding of their needs as a community. The forum aims to ensure that service provision to GRT communities within the Gwent policing area is of a high standard and delivered within an informed, collaborative and multi-agency context.

The forum intends to build a shared perspective between police, partner agencies and GRT communities that encourages and supports members of those communities to report incidents and crimes through improved trust of and accessibility to those services. This involves implementing a clear partnership and communication framework and ensuring that consistent and timely decisions are made to link strategies and services that affect GRT communities. The forum also encourages accountability and feedback to ensure the services we provide are continually reviewed and improved.

We have improved our engagement with organisations that work directly with GRT communities, such as TGP Cymru and their Travelling Ahead programme. During the year, we worked with the Travelling Ahead team as part of a multi-agency approach to address specific cohesion issues within Newport. This work is ongoing; however, early indications show the potential for several positive outcomes, not only for the individuals involved but also for the wider community.

During 2020/21, we will continue to develop opportunities to engage with wider partners and GRT communities to support improvements to service delivery and accessibility and promote community cohesion.

Budget Engagement

For 13 weeks between 14th October 2019 and 12th January 2020, we ran our annual budget engagement programme relating to precept levels and expenditure. The main

focus for survey activity was face-to-face engagement. OPCC staff attended 25 events across Gwent, with four dedicated events in each local authority area. 1,730 responses were received in total, with 1,086 people completing the survey at the events. The majority of responses received were in English, with the exception of 37 Welsh responses. This is a continued improvement on the last two years – in 2018/19, 21 Welsh responses were received, and in 2017/19, there was only one.

Although the majority of people described themselves as White British, 114 people (6.9% of respondents) who completed the survey did not. Of these, 77 people (4.6%) identified themselves as from a BAME group. The average BAME population of Gwent is 4.57%¹². This is a really positive outcome, evidencing our work towards inclusive engagement with our communities. Feedback received from the engagement exercise was used to inform the Commissioner's decision-making regarding the level of precept for 2020/21.

Commemoration and Celebration Events

On April 22nd, the Commissioner joined Gwent Police officers, staff and community representatives to mark the first national Stephen Lawrence Day, commemorating the teenager from south east London who was murdered in a racially motivated attack in 1993.

On 12th July, we joined Gwent Police and forces and organisations across the UK for Remembering Srebrenica week. Remembering Srebrenica week commemorates the acts of violence and hostility and the massacre of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Balkan War, and in particular the area around the town of Srebrenica where 8,000 Bosnian men and boys were systematically killed. Gwent Police's Chief Officer Team and the OPCC highlighted Gwent's commitment to community cohesion, leading to a minute's silence and the laying of a wreath at Police Headquarters.

The Commissioner and staff joined Gwent Police, force Chaplains, LGB&T staff, faith leaders and members of the Jewish community to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2020. This commemoration brought together people from many different communities to share their experiences and reflections on genocide across the world.

Both the OPCC and Gwent Police have supported Pride Cymru, joining with the other Welsh forces in promoting policing as LGB&T inclusive. During 2019, the national police LGB&T event was staged in Wales and the Staff Support Network played a huge part in its success.

We were pleased to support Race Council Cymru's Black History Month event for the second consecutive year. The event on 21st October celebrated the 'Movers, Shakers and Legacy Makers' in multicultural Wales. The Commissioner spoke at the event,

¹² ONS, September 2019

highlighting some of the work that the OPCC and Gwent Police have undertaken to address issues of inequality.

By participating in and supporting such events, we are able to raise awareness not only with our staff, but also with the wider public, of their importance and the lasting impact on our communities in Gwent. This helps to inform our understanding of some of the experiences that could contribute challenges to community cohesion.

Equality Objective Four: Creating a Representative Workforce

Work towards a representative workforce that is reflective of the demographics of Gwent, and ensure that everyone working for Gwent Police and the OPCC are treated fairly and without discrimination

Communities that do not see themselves reflected in the demographics of their police service are less likely to have confidence in the way that they are policed, which can lead to significant community tensions. Rapidly changing communities also mean that operationally, we need to make sure our police officers have a range of skills and knowledge (for example, language and cultural understanding) that equips them to do their jobs effectively.

We have continued to support and monitor Gwent Police's work towards becoming a workforce that represents the communities it serves. Attendance at internal meetings provides oversight and scrutiny of progress against Gwent Police's Representative Workforce Strategy and Action Plan and the work of the Positive Action Outreach Officers. While we recognise that the Strategy is about improving all under-representation, in line with national activity and local priority work undertaken during 2019/20 has focused in increasing the number of BAME police officers. This has included:

- Regular recruitment awareness events in areas with a high proportion of BAME residents
- Offering mentors to all BAME applicants, who provide tailored support through the recruitment process, such as Assessment Centre workshops and interview preparation sessions
- Delivering 'inclusive' representative workforce presentations at Inspector briefings across the East and West LPAs and collaborated with CSOs and Neighbourhood Officers on policing initiatives that impact on the diverse communities of Gwent.

This work supported Gwent Police's recruitment campaign in January 2020 linked to Operation Uplift. The total number of applications received was lower than that for the previous campaign in September 2019, possibly due to all forces running their campaigns at the same time. The number of applications from BAME candidates was the same for both periods. Mentoring is offered to all BAME applicants along with tailored support through the recruitment process, such as Assessment Centre Workshops and interview preparation schemes. Such centres are run in partnership with the University of South Wales (USW). Five of the eight BAME candidates for

January indicated that they would like positive action support during their assessment processes. Of these, two have engaged with the USW sessions, which will include a mock assessment centre. All five were allocated mentors to support them through the process which will continue into 2020/21.

The OPCC monitors Gwent Police’s Gender Pay Gap reporting, which will be incorporated into the Representative Workforce Strategy and Action Plan. In relation to the analysis undertaken, the number of police officers and police staff ‘in scope’ totalled 2,082 and comprised 953 women and 1,129 men as at 31 March 2019 (compared to 888 women and 1,100 men the year before). Pay gap reporting is undertaken annually. For all officers and staff, the mean (average) pay gap for women within Gwent Police has improved since 2017. Female officers and staff represented at the higher end of the pay scale has also improved for the third year running. However, the mean pay gap for female police staff has increased. The number of female police staff is significantly greater than that of male police staff, which will affect the outcome of pay gap analysis.

The OPCC is not legally required to undertake and report on our own gender pay analysis due to the number of employees within the organisation. To demonstrate our commitment to ensuring transparency and equality in the workplace, under the new SEP we will carry out activity to review pay gap information for our staff and publish the results of our analysis. This will help us to identify and work to address any related inequality within the organisation.

Work has also continued towards effective recording and monitoring of officer and staff ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability. However, challenges remain in engaging staff with demographic recording processes and increasing confidence across the workforce to disclose their associations with particular protected characteristics. This continues to be a focus for Representative Workforce Meetings, particularly for sexual orientation, and will help the organisation to effectively identify the extent of under-representation across all characteristics.

During the year, the OPCC restructure was fully embedded. Demographic data is recorded for monitoring purposes (where disclosed) and published on the OPCC website¹³. In 2019/20, the OPCC team included the following staff (excluding the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner):

2019/20 OPCC staff representation:

<i>Number of posts in the structure</i>	17 (FTE)
<i>Proportion of staff who are women</i>	13
<i>Proportion of staff who are members of an ethnic minority</i>	0
<i>Proportion of staff who have a disability</i>	2

¹³ <https://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/en/about-us/my-team/>

We recognise that the OPCC is under-represented across a range of protected characteristics. The Commissioner is committed to improving the diversity of the organisation when opportunities arise. We continue to be Disability Confident 'Committed' and promote our website.

We will continue to explore opportunities to align ourselves with other employment initiatives to support our work towards increasing the diversity of our staff. For example, during 2020/21 we will work with Chwarae Teg, Wales's leading gender equality charity, with the aim of becoming a FairPlay Employer. We want to be a workplace where everybody is able to achieve their full potential regardless of their gender and the FairPlay Employer benchmark will support us to deliver gender equality in our organisation, giving us the benefits of a truly balanced workforce.

More widely than that, we want to play our part in tackling barriers to work so that everyone, regardless of background or any protected characteristics, is able to achieve their potential. Increasing our direct engagement with under-represented communities and continuing to raise awareness of the roles within and responsibilities of the OPCC, while demonstrating a fair and inclusive culture supports this commitment and we will maximise any opportunities to diversify the workforce in future recruitment activities.

Welsh Language

The Equality Act does not cover Welsh language as a characteristic. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 introduced the concept of Welsh Language Standards in 2016 for public bodies and other named organisations. Separate Standards documents were issued to the Commissioner and the Chief Constable and individual Standards Compliance Reports are published annually.

Many of the requirements under the Welsh Language Standards align themselves with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Internal working practices continue to evolve to ensure that the principle of Welsh language equality is respected in every aspect of service provision. Progress against the Standards is monitored at the Welsh Language Meeting, attended by the OPCC.

We have continued to work with Gwent Police to improve the accessibility and availability of our services in Welsh, including within recruitment practices. We increased our engagement with Welsh speaking communities, particularly with our consultation processes, and plans are in place to launch OPCC Welsh language social media pages in 2020/21. This will help to raise the profile of the organisation to our Welsh speaking communities and promote employment opportunities within both the OPCC and Gwent Police.

We have also established the minimum requirement of 'Welsh desirable' for every vacant or new post and have an assessment process in place to determine where 'Welsh essential' posts are required. This included the Chief Constable recruitment process in 2019.

All staff have completed the level one 'Introduction to Welsh' sessions and formal opportunities to increase Welsh language skills during work time are offered across the organisation. During the year, one member of OPCC staff enrolled onto Welsh language classes.

2019/20 also saw the launch of the Welsh Language Network for Welsh speaking officers and staff. Aligned to the Staff Support Networks, the Welsh Language Network intends to provide support for Welsh learners and speakers, representing language choice across the organisation and supporting recruitment processes. We encourage all staff with Welsh language skills to engage with the Network to support regular use and development of Welsh in the workplace.

We recognise the challenges in providing a bilingual workforce and continue to engage with the Welsh Language Commissioner and other partners in working towards creating a local police service that truly enables language choice.

In February 2020, we supported Gwent Police's first Welsh language public engagement event. The 'Welsh – Our Language' conference brought together Welsh speakers and learners from all over Gwent to celebrate the Welsh language and provide an opportunity for participants to develop ideas about how to increase the range of opportunities to use the Welsh language throughout policing services. Both the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable spoke at the conference which also helped to raise awareness of both the OPCC and Gwent Police's commitments to improving Welsh language representation across our workforces. Feedback from the day will be used by both organisations as part of our improvement processes in the coming year.

Equality Objective Five: Mental Health

To work in partnership to improve services delivered to all people experiencing mental ill health and ensure the mental wellbeing of all personnel

We have continued to work with Gwent Police and partners in the provision of services to people experiencing mental health crisis and to provide an informed workplace that identifies and supports personnel at risk of or experiencing mental poor mental health.

The Welsh Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat remains the golden thread that runs through operational mental health activity. The Concordat commitments are delivered through a Multi-Agency Delivery Group that meets quarterly, attended by Gwent Police's Mental Health Liaison Officer. The OPCC is a member of the Mental Health and Learning Disability Partnership, hosted by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. Both of these meetings provide opportunities to monitor partnership approaches to supporting people with mental health needs when they come into contact with the police.

Mental Health Triage Team

The OPCC has continued to support the provision of the Mental Health Triage Team. Now an integral part of Gwent Police's Force Communications Suite, the service offers professional advice linked to mental health to any officer or staff member dealing with a mental health incident. On average, the team deals with 30 mental health incidents per day, including arranging timely mental health assessments with partner agencies. They also consult on proposed uses of Section 136 detentions and advise officers on whether alternative and less restrictive options are available to support the person in crisis. In February 2020, the team received 22 requests of this nature, diverting 13 of these potential Section 136 detentions to a more appropriate outcome.

Use of custody for Section 136 is reported in section B of Objective 2. As previously noted, use of custody for detentions of this nature had continued to decrease. Where individuals end up in police custody, decision-making processes are subject to scrutiny to ensure they meet the criteria for custody admission. In all cases, individuals were found to have met the criteria.

The Commissioner remains committed to ensuring that the level of service for people in mental health crisis maintains a high standard. We monitor the performance of the Triage Team to understand the impact of this demand on our services and the outcomes for people in mental health crisis. Where appropriate, we provide feedback to enable continuous improvement of the service. Working with partners, we will identify opportunities to continue to provide a sustainable and effective triage service that supports some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Wellbeing

The wellbeing of officers and staff has remained a focus for both the OPCC and Gwent Police during the year. Gwent Police wellbeing and sickness absence is monitored by the OPCC at the Strategy and Performance Board.

Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) is now firmly embedded within Gwent Police and aims to offer risk assessments to any officer or staff member who may have been exposed to trauma. Between April 2019 and February 2020, 994 officers and staff were offered assessments and 89 individuals accepted the offer. For those engaging with assessments, the process allows for early intervention in cases where an increased risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has been identified as a result of their experience.

The OPCC continues to support and participate in workforce wellbeing initiatives linked to physical and mental health. Examples include:

- The 'My Health and Wellbeing' intranet site, offering a one-stop shop for staff to access up-to-date and relevant information on all aspects of wellbeing
- Free exercise classes
- Subsidised chiropractic services delivered through the University of South Wales

- Annual flu vaccinations
- Wellbeing Ambassadors
- Health and wellbeing support groups, such as Fibromyalgia and menopause
- Monthly Health Cafés focusing on a range of topics, including health screening, breast cancer, prostate cancer, menopause and fertility
- The continuation of the Cycle to Work scheme.

In March 2020, all OPCC staff were directed to work at home, in line with the UK and Welsh Government's lockdown legislation and guidance in Wales. A number of processes were put in place to support staff in continuing to undertake their roles and manage their work time effectively whilst balancing home and family commitments. In addition to regular supervision and team meetings, informal sessions were implemented, including 'Teabreak Tuesday'. This half hour virtual catch-up brings staff together to help to reduce feelings of isolation from colleagues and promote positive social contact. Regular team meetings take place online and frequent 1:1 sessions between staff and line managers are held on a flexible basis, according to individual staff needs. OPCC 'Away Days' have continued virtually to further support and engage with staff during this uncertain and unprecedented time. We will continue to monitor the situation in 2020/21 to ensure that staff feel supported and reassured as we face the possibility of more lasting adjustments to our working practices.

4. Conclusion and Future Work

Publishing this Annual Report for the last year of the SEP 2016-2020 enables us to recognise and acknowledge the work undertaken across the organisation to progress our commitment to equality and diversity aligned to the five Equality Objectives.

During this period, we saw a number of improvements to the way we deliver services, as well as efforts to grow our understanding of the needs and perspectives of those that use them. We increased our partnership working to provide more comprehensive delivery of support for vulnerable individuals and explored ways to provide sustainability for existing collaborative programmes.

Our scrutiny of Gwent Police's use of force and stop and search has continued to provide challenge and support, enabling implementation of a number of positive changes and the development of closer self-assessment of local policing practices. The continued reduction of the use of custody for Section 136 detentions and the impact of the Mental Health Triage Team are very positive outcomes that reflect our commitment to improving the experiences of people experiencing mental health crisis in Gwent.

The provision of funding schemes to support children and young people has continued to make a difference, particularly in geographic areas of greater socio-economic deprivation. We successfully improved our accessibility through our public engagement activity, and the implementation of the estates audit supports our ambition to increase the diversity of our workforce and become an employer of choice in Gwent. The development of our diversion schemes will continue to provide

individuals with opportunities to access help and support and minimise the wider impact of their actions.

We welcomed additional recruitment by Gwent Police under Operation Uplift and use of positive action initiatives with BAME candidates. We embedded the OPCC restructure, enabling us to develop our approaches to addressing under-representation within the organisation. We also supported Gwent Police's first public Welsh language event, which provided us with an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to creating a local police service that enables language choice.

However, we recognise that there is still much to do in ensuring the provision of a policing service that inspires confidence in and reflects local communities. Fostering an organisational culture that demonstrates the importance of equality and inclusivity is a key component of our success and we must continue to work with transparency and demonstrate our accountability. In this way we aspire to deliver a high-quality service that Gwent's diverse communities are confident to use and engage with. The areas that remain work in progress in the previous SEP will roll over into our new four-year Plan and inform the associated Equality Objectives.

Early in 2020, we began public engagement on our new joint OPCC and Gwent Police Equality Objectives for 2020-24. In addition to the Youth Question Time event, engagement plans included attendance at community groups, meetings and public events, an online survey, and internal consultation with OPCC and Gwent Police officers and staff. Due to the impact of lockdown in March, alternative engagement methods were explored to ensure that the results of our engagement work are meaningful and support our progress for next four years.

A joint Consultation Evaluation Report containing the results of the engagement work and other evidence will be published in support of the new SEP and Objectives, which will set out the vision for the OPCC and Gwent Police as we continue to address both the longstanding and the emerging issues that affect our communities, those engaged with criminal justice processes, and our officers and staff.

The SEP will be underpinned by individual Delivery Plans for the OPCC and Gwent Police. The Delivery Plans will determine the actions and activities to be taken by the various business areas and departments in each organisation. Our Equality Objectives will be supported by clear key performance goals. Where possible, our ambitions and success criteria will feature within our Plans, which will benchmark where we are now and set out where we aim to be in 2024.

These Delivery Plans will be internal working documents that will be used to monitor progress against the objectives under OPCC and Gwent Police governance and reporting processes, and to inform the production of our Annual Reports.

5. Monitoring and Scrutiny

The OPCC monitors Gwent Police's progress against the Equality Objectives at their internal People Strategy Board with regular related reports, including their Equality

Plan Annual Report, to the Commissioner’s Strategy and Performance Board. Gwent Police’s review of their meeting structure and associated governance will provide an opportunity to enhance internal scrutiny and accountability across the areas contained within their Equality Delivery Plan. We will continue to work with the force as their governance processes are embedded and support any required improvement work recommended by external bodies such as HMICFRS.

OPCC progress is reported to the OPCC Management Board. The OPCC Equality Plan Annual Report is also provided to the Strategy and Performance Board, and further to the Police and Crime Panel for their consideration and feedback on how we have performed against the Equality Objectives.

6. Contact

For more information on our work related to equality and diversity, please contact:

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