

West Midlands Police Authority



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HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY INSPECTION FINDINGS

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Inspection

HMIC Summary

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carries out independent inspections of police forces to monitor and report on all aspects of policing activity with the aim of driving improvements in policing.

HMIC publish the 'The Police Report Card' on the internet which gives information about risk, cost and performance for all police forces, and allows the public to compare the performance of their force against others.

Police Report Card Grades

The HMIC Report Card gives an assessment of all 43 forces in England and Wales, rating them as Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor in key areas of service delivery.

West Midlands were awarded the following grades

Local Crime and Policing	Fair
Protection from Serious Harm	Excellent
Confidence and Satisfaction	Fair

In the Report Card HMIC makes the following comments;

West Midlands Police plays a significant part in protecting the public from serious harm and the force has been assessed as 'Excellent' in this field of endeavour. Performance in dealing with major crime and tackling serious and organised crime is particularly strong, as are preparatory arrangements for events that may result in outbreaks of public disorder.

The force has extensive experience and expertise in dealing with complex major crime investigations and working with neighbouring forces against organised crime gangs. More than 300 staff deal with homicides and serious violence, some linked to the problems posed by 'guns and gangs'. The force plays a leading role in coordinating activity to combat terrorism and domestic extremism. Staff are skilled at responding to these threats at regional, national and international levels.

In addition to the significant successes in disrupting criminality and bringing offenders to justice, the force strives and plans for improvements to local services. It has made significant efforts to consult all sectors of the community and conducts local surveys of more than 21,000 people each year. Around 92% said they believed the police would treat them with respect. The force has worked successfully to improve the confidence of victims of crime and there is a strong commitment to dealing with anti-social behaviour (ASB).

West Midlands was assessed as 'Fair' for its delivery of the Policing Pledge; perceptions of ASB are stable and effective systems are in place to identify repeat incidents. The force uses community resolutions to deal with some crimes, whereby victims have a say on how the case should proceed.

There are also areas for improvement. Overall levels of crime have been falling but the risk of being a victim of violent crime, including robbery, remains higher than in similar areas. Not all 999 calls are attended within the target time¹.

Other Inspection Results

A summary of the findings for inspections conducted during 2010-2011 are outlined below.

Anti –Social Behaviour

In this inspection² HMIC acknowledge that 'West Midlands experiences a relatively higher level of anti-social behaviour and a higher level of crime per head of population'

The report also made the following observations:

ASB is a force priority and features in the policing plan. The commitment to this is clear, having been recently emphasised in the 'Manual of Standards' to ensure a consistent approach is taken to ASB throughout the force area.

The level of resources devoted to ASB and the data and information analysed demonstrates a clear commitment to tackling ASB.

Ipsos Mori Anti –Social Behaviour research results

In addition to the inspection, HMIC commissioned an independent survey of 408 telephone interviews with people who contacted West Midlands Police in September 2009 to report anti-social behaviour. Fieldwork was conducted between 4 May and 3 June 2010.

The results show that the force is performing broadly in line with the national average for the areas considered in the survey which included;

- Callers feelings about the local level of anti-social behaviour
- Experiences dealing with the police
- Satisfaction with police action and feedback

¹ This is an extract from the HMIC Police Report Card as at 24 March 2011 but refers to an HMIC inspection that took place in 2009. The issues mentioned have been addressed by the force.

² The HMIC Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report on West Midlands Police was published in September 2010

Custody Conditions

This inspection is part of an ongoing programme of inspections of police custody carried out jointly by HM Inspector of Prisons and HMIC. These inspections contribute to the United Kingdom's response to its international obligation to ensure regular and independent inspection of all places of detention. The inspections look at strategy, treatment and conditions, individual rights and health care.

The report for West Midlands Police³ reflected a positive picture of custody provision although it highlights a number of issues which require attention.

The findings included the following:

Areas of effective practice

- There was clear strategic leadership
- The move to a centralised model brought greater oversight and improved service delivery
- Staffing levels and health care provision was good
- Substance misuse services were generally good
- Partnerships generally worked well

Areas for improvement⁴

- There are safety issues regarding ligature points
- Data on the use of force was not used effectively to identify trends
- There was a mixed approach to risk assessments

³ Published in March 2011

⁴ The recommendations mentioned in the report are subject to an action plan to resolve the issues.