



Inspecting policing  
in the public interest



## **DELIVERING THE POLICING PLEDGE**

Gwent Police

# “Are the local police delivering for you?”

The ‘Policing Pledge’ sets out ten minimum standards that the police service promised to deliver from 31 December 2008.

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has reviewed how well the 43 forces in England and Wales are delivering the standards they promised the public.

This report provides members of the public with information on the performance of their local force.

Each Pledge standard and the three areas relating to how the force is working towards its delivery have been graded. HMIC has combined these assessments to give an overall grade for the force.

The overall grade for  
Gwent Police is:

**FAIR**

## The different grades

**EXCELLENT**

is awarded for exceptional performance which is consistently above and beyond the required standard.

**GOOD**

is defined as meeting the standard, although there may be minor dips in performance.

**FAIR**

is awarded where performance is variable and falls short of the required standard. Remedial action is needed.

**POOR**

is used when performance fails to meet an acceptable level. Immediate remedial action is needed.

## THE POLICING PLEDGE POINTS

## HMIC GRADING

### PLEDGE POINT 1

Always treat you fairly with dignity and respect, ensuring you have fair access to our services at a time that is reasonable and suitable for you.

GOOD

### PLEDGE POINT 2

Provide you with information so you know who your dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Team are, where they are based, how to contact them and how to work with them.

GOOD

### PLEDGE POINT 3

Ensure your Neighbourhood Policing Team and other police patrols are visible and on your patch at times when they will be most effective and when you tell us you most need them. We will ensure that your team is not taken away from neighbourhood business more than is absolutely necessary. Officers will spend at least 80% of their time visibly working in your neighbourhood, tackling your priorities. Staff turnover will be minimised.

GOOD

### PLEDGE POINT 4

Respond to every message directed to your Neighbourhood Policing Team within 24 hours and, where necessary, provide a more detailed response as soon as we can.

FAIR

### PLEDGE POINT 5

Aim to answer 999 calls within 10 seconds, deploying to emergencies immediately, giving an estimated time of arrival (ETA), and getting to you safely, and as quickly as possible. In urban areas, we will aim to get to you within 15 minutes and in rural areas within 20 minutes.

FAIR

### PLEDGE POINT 6

Answer all non-emergency calls promptly. If attendance is needed, send a patrol, giving you an ETA, and:

- if you are vulnerable or upset, we will aim to be with you within 60 minutes;
- if you are calling about an issue that we have agreed with your community will be a neighbourhood priority and attendance is required, we will aim to be with you within 60 minutes;
- alternatively, if appropriate, we will make an appointment to see you at a time that fits in with your life and within 48 hours;
- if agreed that attendance is not necessary, we will give you advice, answer your questions and/or put you in touch with someone who can help.

FAIR

### PLEDGE POINT 7

Arrange regular public meetings to agree your priorities at least once a month, giving you a chance to meet your local team with other members of your community. These will include opportunities such as surgeries, street briefings and mobile police station visits, which will be arranged to meet local needs and requirements.

GOOD

### PLEDGE POINT 8

Provide monthly updates on progress, and on local crime and policing issues. This will include the provision of crime maps, information on specific crimes and what happened to those brought to justice, details of what action we and our partners are taking to make your neighbourhood safer, and information on how your force is performing.

GOOD

### PLEDGE POINT 9

If you have been a victim of crime, agree with you how often you would like to be kept informed of progress in your case and for how long. You have the right to be kept informed at least every month if you wish, and for as long as is reasonable.

FAIR

### PLEDGE POINT 10

Acknowledge any dissatisfaction with the service you have received within 24 hours of reporting it to us. To help us fully resolve the matter, discuss with you how it will be handled, give you an opportunity to talk in person to someone about your concerns and agree with you what will be done about them and how quickly.

FAIR

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### PLEDGE POINT 1

Supervisors made contact with customers to seek feedback on the quality of service provided by their staff members. Police stations had clear signs advising visitors on opening hours and were opened as advertised. Hearing loops were installed in front enquiry offices. People could register for an SMS text or minicom facility for the deaf to receive information about force activities. **But** some station notice boards were out of date with no clear advice on alternative ways to contact officers when stations were shut.

### PLEDGE POINT 2

Posters in public areas displayed the names, photographs and contact details of Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs), which were also publicised on the internet and in the community with information on how the public could work with the police. A Gwent Police version of the Policing Pledge had been published in both English and Welsh and had been widely circulated, and an extensive marketing strategy was underway to reach local communities.

### PLEDGE POINT 3

NPT staff aimed to be visible in their communities at least 85% of the time and local monitoring suggested that staff were rarely deployed elsewhere. An audit was planned to ensure the accuracy of this information. Officers were expected to remain on NPTs for two years. Local patrol strategies ensured NPTs spent time tackling local priorities. **But** some response teams worked separately from NPTs and were unaware of local priorities.

### PLEDGE POINT 4

Voicemail guidelines were being introduced that require a standard greeting and alternative contact numbers to be given to callers. Messages were regularly checked and a message book ensured calls were responded to within 24 hours. NPT email addresses were displayed on the intranet and in local publications. Team emails also gave supervisors access so they were able to respond to messages when officers were away. **But** checks found responses to telephone messages and emails did not always satisfy the Pledge and a small number of letters sent to test the speed of response did not receive a reply.

### PLEDGE POINT 5

Response officers were based at strategic stations that enabled the 15 minute target time to be met. The Chief Constable emphasised the importance of officers arriving safely with target times being of secondary importance. Changes in the way 999 calls were handled and resources dispatched, were introduced to ensure that answering 999 calls within 10 seconds improved. **But** all emergency calls were only measured to a 15 minute target and it was not clear whether urban targets were being met. Estimated times of arrival were not given to the public.

### PLEDGE POINT 6

Control room staff checked whether calls related to local priorities and prioritised them for response in 60 minutes. Dedicated officers provide an effective scheduled appointment system within 48 hours and local monitoring of force performance was good. **But** some neighbourhood officers and call handlers were unaware of the enhanced service that should be provided to callers who were 'vulnerable' or 'upset'.

### PLEDGE POINT 7

Opportunities for the public to meet their local NPT were advertised on the internet, in public venues and updates provided through the media, local networks and newsletters. Prior to public meetings at least 100 people per ward were asked what issues they would like to be raised as potential priorities and these were considered along with those raised by the public who had attended. A wide range of engagement opportunities, beyond formal meetings, were held aimed at broad sections of the community. **But** training would have helped staff run public meetings more effectively.

### PLEDGE POINT 8

Crime mapping information and updates on local priorities were on the internet with local newsletters and press articles providing detail of what police and partners have done to tackle the issues of most importance to the community. **But** there was some reluctance by officers to reveal information about local crimes and offenders due to concerns about increasing the fear of crime.

### PLEDGE POINT 9

Officers understood the need to keep victims up to date on the progress of investigations and the crime recording system allowed officers to record victim updates. Victims were asked when ringing the police how they wished to be kept informed. **But** many victims were not asked for how often and how long they wished to be kept informed. Some victim details provided to officers who take over responsibility for investigations were inaccurate. Paperwork given to victims advises them that they should receive monthly updates.

### PLEDGE POINT 10

A customer dissatisfaction recovery service was in the early stages of development. **But** such reports were not recorded and opportunities to improve were lost. Arrangements for the Professional Standards Department to acknowledge complaints in 24 hours were not robust.

## WHAT THE FORCE WAS DOING TO IMPROVE ITS PERFORMANCE

As well as reporting on the force's delivery of each Pledge standard, HMIC has also assessed and graded the efforts it was making to improve performance:

#### HMIC GRADING

Surveys and management meetings were being used to improve performance; public satisfaction and confidence data were taken into account.

FAIR

The force had identified deficiencies in its delivery of the Pledge and was taking action in those areas.

FAIR

Implementation was led by the force's senior team, the Police Authority was involved, staff were being trained and the Pledge was communicated to staff and the public.

GOOD



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This publication is printed  
on 50% recycled paper

The report is available in alternative languages and formats on request.

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