

Neighbourhood policing guidelines

Supporting material for **senior leaders**



Supporting material for senior leaders

Select a link for information, practical advice and resources in support of each of the guidelines. The advice is not prescriptive and you should think about how it applies to your specific situation and what resources might be available locally. The material is largely based on learning from a review of the research evidence on implementing neighbourhood policing. Frontline officers and staff were also involved in their development

You may find it useful to review the separate supporting material for frontline officers, staff and volunteers as it provides further detail on how to implement each of the guidelines. Some material is duplicated here.

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1. Engaging communities


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Guideline 1: Engaging communities

Evidence-base

 Empirical evidence: **good** | moderate | limited

 Practitioner evidence: **available**

Chief officers should work with police and crime commissioners to deliver and support neighbourhood policing and must ensure it is built on effective engagement and consultation with communities.

Essential elements include:

- Officers, staff and volunteers being responsible for and having a targeted visible presence in neighbourhoods
- A clearly defined and transparent purpose for engagement activities
- Regular formal and informal contact with communities
- Working with partners (eg, by identifying communities and sharing arrangements for engagement)
- Making available information about local crime and policing issues to communities
- Engagement that is tailored to the needs and preferences of different communities
- Using engagement to identify local priorities and inform problem-solving
- Officers, staff and volunteers providing feedback and being accountable to communities
- Officers, staff and volunteers supporting communities, where appropriate, to be more active in the policing of their local areas.

Community engagement in neighbourhoods should:

- Provide an ongoing two-way dialogue between the police and the public
- Enable the police to develop a better understanding of communities and their needs, risks and threats.

This guideline is underpinned by **section 34 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011** which provides a legal requirement for chief officers to make arrangements to consult with the public in each neighbourhood, provide local information about crime and policing and hold regular public meetings.



Practical advice: Engaging communities

Visible presence

Officers, staff and/or volunteers need to have targeted visible presence in communities. Targeted foot patrol, when implemented in combination with community engagement and problem-solving, can reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, reassure the public and improve their perceptions of the police. Random patrols and only responding to calls are unlikely to have the same effect.

Options to maximise visibility alongside other demands include:

- targeting hot spots of high crime or antisocial behaviour, low public confidence and/or high footfall
- optimising the time spent in hot spots
- using social media
- developing patrol plans based on hot spots for response officers
- recruiting volunteers and special constables to have a presence in particular areas.



Foot patrol should not just be about being visible. It provides an opportunity for officers, staff and volunteers to:

- have informal conversations
- develop networks
- gather community intelligence
- find out about local problems.

Maintaining a targeted visible presence over time is also important. Public confidence is likely to decline if people think foot patrol, community engagement and problem-solving are getting worse.

Clarifying the purpose of engagement

As **community engagement** can have multiple aims, it is important to be clear and open about why you want to engage and are using particular engagement methods. Aims include:

- building trust, such as after a critical incident
- listening to and being more responsive to people's needs
- encouraging communities to take greater ownership of solving local problems.

Community engagement may also have a number of benefits, such as:

- improving public perceptions of the police
- improving feelings of safety
- reducing perceived antisocial behaviour and disorder.

People may belong to multiple communities, only some of which may be geographical. A person can, for instance, be a part of a community because of their lifestyle, online activities or age.

Resources

- **College – Authorised professional practice on communication and engagement**
- **College – Community engagement in policing: Lessons from the literature**
- **College – What works briefing: The effects of hot-spot policing on crime**
- **College – What works briefing: The effectiveness of visible police patrol**

Information provision

Forces are required under **Section 34** of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to provide people with information about crime and policing in their neighbourhoods. This information should include how the police aim to deal with crime and disorder in the local area.

Engagement methods

There is a statutory requirement on the police to find out about which crime and disorder issues concern local communities.

Section 34 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 requires forces to:

- seek the views of the public about crime and disorder in their neighbourhood
- hold regular public meetings in every neighbourhood.



Senior leadership support

Senior leadership support could include you:

- ensuring the force, as a minimum, fulfils the statutory requirements for information provision and community engagement under **section 34** of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011
- coordinating activities with partners and encouraging them to:
 - fulfil their statutory duty under **section 17** of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
 - be involved in priority-setting exercises
 - take action against non-police priorities
- providing visible commitment to **community engagement** and emphasising its importance to neighbourhood problem-solving
- making sure community engagement is reflected in governance and accountability arrangements (for example, performance and tasking frameworks, annual appraisals)
- coordinating community engagement activity with the police and crime commissioner's office where appropriate
- emphasising that neighbourhood policing remains important but acknowledging that it can be a challenge when organised crime and public protection have to be managed on a routine basis
- making tools and templates for community engagement available (for example, beat meeting agendas, methods for **identifying problems** and agreeing priorities).



2. Solving problems

Select a link for information, practical advice and resources on solving problems

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Practical advice

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Guideline 2: Solving problems

Evidence-base

 Empirical evidence: **good** | moderate | limited

 Practitioner evidence: **available**

Chief officers should ensure officers, staff and volunteers use structured problem-solving to deal with local priorities, working collaboratively with communities and, where appropriate, private, public and voluntary sector partners¹.

Essential elements include:

- A focus on proactive prevention
- Systematic use of a structured problem-solving process, such as SARA (scanning, analysis, response, assessment)
- Detailed problem specifications based on multiple sources of information
- Involving communities in each stage of the problem-solving process
- Using evidence-based and innovative responses that target the underlying causes of problems and are tailored to local context
- Routinely assessing the impact of responses and sharing good practice
- Integration with other parts of the organisation to support its delivery
- Working with partners (eg, by sharing data and analytical resource and delivering responses).

Problem-solving in neighbourhoods should:

- Enable police and partners to address long-term issues affecting communities and provide reassurance
- Reduce demand on the police service and partners.

¹ Hereafter 'partners'

Practical advice: Solving problems

The value of problem-solving

Problem-solving is one of the best-evidenced policing strategies. It has been shown to reduce crime, antisocial behaviour and demand in a wide range of different contexts when fully implemented.

Each stage of the problem-solving process – which is captured by the **SARA model** – is essential to its success and can be aligned with the established **tasking and coordination processes**.





The SARA model

Resources

- [UCL – Problem-solving for neighbourhood policing](#)
- [POP Center](#)
- [College – What works briefing: The effects of problem-oriented policing](#)

The importance of assessment

One of the recognised weaknesses with problem-solving is the lack of any evaluation of impact. Without this assessment:

- officers, staff and volunteers will not know whether their responses have had their desired effect
- resources could be wasted in the future on implementing ineffective or harmful responses
- others may not be able to benefit from earlier experiences.

A proportionate approach

Assessments do not need to be expensive or complicated, and should be proportionate to the nature of the problem/response:

- Evaluations may be more appropriate for responses or tactics that:
 - are expensive
 - target high-harm problems
 - are riskier in terms of likely impact
 - have a weak evidence base.

Ideally, and as a minimum, outcomes (for example, crime) should be compared:

- before and after the response was implemented
- in the community/area that received the response and in a similar community/area that did not.

An assessment of **costs and benefits** would be an advantage and help with developing business cases.

The support of analytical specialists to plan and carry out this level of assessment is likely to be required.

- Light-touch assessments may be more appropriate for responses or tactics that:
 - deal with relatively small-scale and low-harm problems
 - low-risk in terms of their likely impact
 - well-evidenced elsewhere.

These may simply involve officers and staff checking a problem has been resolved to a community's satisfaction and that there are no ongoing concerns.

They should also ask whether anything else could have made a difference when they used the response or tactic. If the answer is 'no', you can be more confident in your results.

Evaluation example	Light-touch assessment example
Problem	
Increase in burglary dwelling	Public concerns about fly tipping
Response	
Increase in police patrols and cocooning	Referral to local authority and community clear-up day
Assessment	
Comparing crime rates before and after the response, relative to a similar place without the same response	Gathering feedback through community engagement after the response

Resources

- [POP Center – Assessing responses to problems: Did it work?](#)
- [EIF – Evaluating early intervention at the local level](#)

➤ EIF – Evaluating early intervention: Six common pitfalls and how to avoid them

- [College – Research surgeries](#)
- [College – Research guidance](#)
- [College – Cost benefit tool](#)

Senior leadership support

Senior leadership support could include you:

- providing visible commitment to problem-solving and relating it to other areas of business
- setting clear expectations of what is required from supervisors and frontline practitioners (for example, the need for analysis and assessment)
- encouraging continuity in neighbourhood roles and managing the consequences of staff turnover
- ensuring officers, staff and volunteers have the knowledge and skills necessary for problem-solving
- recognising and rewarding good problem-solving activities – including analysis – across the force (for example, commendations and awards)
- encouraging and supporting innovation across the force
- working with partners at a strategic level to facilitate and support problem-solving, such as by:
 - aligning priorities
 - clarifying roles and responsibilities
 - agreeing data-sharing protocols to protect vulnerable people
- identifying and taking opportunities to secure additional analytical support (for example, from partners and academia)



- making sure problem-solving is reflected in governance and accountability arrangements (for example, performance and tasking frameworks, annual appraisals)
- establishing mechanisms for recording and collating community intelligence and sharing examples of problem-solving activity (for example, problem specifications).



3. Targeting activity

Select a link for information, practical advice and resources on targeting activity.

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Guideline 3: Targeting activity

Chief officers should ensure policing activities within neighbourhoods are targeted according to the needs of different communities, taking account of threat, risk, harm and vulnerability.


Essential elements include:


- Scanning and analysis that takes account of all relevant information (including public perceptions) in order to target people and places effectively
- Identifying what different communities need from neighbourhood policing (including reassurance and harm reduction)
- Identifying and prioritising those people, groups and places with the greatest needs
- Being clear about how police and partner responses are coordinated and target places, victims and offenders.

Targeting activity should:

- Provide greater focus to community engagement, problem-solving, prevention and early intervention
- Inform resource deployment decisions
- Lead to a more coordinated response with partners and reduce demand.

Evidence-base

 Empirical evidence: **good** | moderate | limited

 Practitioner evidence: **available**



Practical advice: Targeting activity

Targeting people and places

There is strong evidence that the police can reduce demand by **targeting the people and places** who are most at risk.

Crime, antisocial behaviour and related harms are often highly concentrated. Their distribution could help you to identify those communities, groups and individuals with the greatest needs:

- **Places** – Crime and calls for service – which vary in their harm levels – are generally higher in city centres and other industrial and commercial locations as well as in areas of high social deprivation. Incidents also tend to cluster in geographic hot spots. These tend to be fairly small ‘micro’ places, like individual addresses and street corners, and can suffer from chronic problems over many years.
- **Victims** – Some people are more vulnerable to being victims than others. There is also likely to be a small number of chronic repeat victims because the risk of victimisation increases with every repeat experience. This concentration of risk may be even higher for victims of antisocial behaviour.
- **Offenders** – While most offenders commit only one or two fairly minor offences, estimates suggest 10 per cent of active offenders commit around 50 per cent of all crime.



Targeted enforcement may deliver some short term results but is likely to be more effective alongside targeted support that offers prolific offenders a way out of crime. Hot spots policing that targets places and offenders at the same time is less likely to be counterproductive (ie, increase crime) than simply targeting offenders for enforcement.

- **Public perceptions** – These tend to be fairly stable but can respond to changes in the local area and police actions. Some people will feel **much less safe or have lower confidence** in the police than others. Particular crimes also have a disproportionate influence on people’s feelings of safety, though these will vary by area.

Officers, staff and volunteers may need the support of analytical specialists to access the latest information on the distribution of crime, antisocial behaviour and harm to ensure their knowledge of the local area is up to date.

Resources

- **College – What works briefing: People and place – how resources can be targeted**
- **College – What works briefing: Targeted approaches to crime and disorder reduction**

Threat, risk, harm and vulnerability

Targeting activities

With reduced resources, a targeted approach to neighbourhood policing is likely to be required.

Detailed scanning and analysis of police and partner data will be needed to ensure policing activities in neighbourhoods are focused on local threats, risks, harms and vulnerabilities. This may lead to resources and activities being varied according to the identified needs of different communities (for example, reassurance and harm reduction).

Considerations

A targeted approach to neighbourhood policing may also need to take account of:

- high-risk individuals – such as **chronic repeat victims** or prolific offenders – in otherwise low-risk areas or communities
- different types of threat, risk, harm and vulnerability:
 - **severity**
 - impact on public perceptions
 - economic and social cost
- whether the size of neighbourhoods allows officers and staff to develop sufficient local knowledge and take effective action
- the additional responsibilities given to officers and staff that could reduce their ability to engage communities and solve problems over time
- the availability of other police and partner resources to support neighbourhood policing
- how other demands (for example, calls for service) will be managed so there is sufficient time for community engagement and problem-solving.

Resources

- **University of Cambridge – Cambridge crime harm index**
- **Office of National Statistics – Crime severity score**



- **Home Office – The economic and social costs of crime**
- **UPSI – The signal crimes perspective: a 60 second briefing**
- **UCL – Vulnerable localities index**
- **College – How do you respond to the needs of vulnerable people?**
- **College – Police community support officers: Operational handbook**

Prevention

Potential value

By identifying the people and places at risk of harm in the future and **intervening early**, it should be possible for the police and their partners to:

- prevent problems escalating
- reduce demand in the longer term.

There is good evidence about what the police can do to prevent chronic problems in particular places, like **hot spots policing** and **tactics designed to reduce repeat victimisation**. Less is known about what police activities are effective at reducing the risks faced by individual people and families in the longer term. The evidence on **how to improve outcomes for children and young people** focuses on schooling and parenting interventions, which underlines the importance of the police working with partners and communities.

Thinking about long-term prevention

When planning activities aimed at long-term prevention, it is important to consider:

- what risk factors increase the chances of a person or place coming to harm

- what protective factors have the opposite effect
- the predictive accuracy of risk assessments because of the potential for them to wrongly identify people and places as being at risk (or not)
- how interventions might go about reducing (or inadvertently increasing) the risk
- who is best placed to deliver those interventions (ie, police, partners or communities).

These considerations may provide a clearer justification for targeting interventions and might improve their chances of success.

Example risk factor	Example protective factor
Level	
Individual person	Neighbourhood
Factor	
Multiple ACEs (adverse childhood experiences)	Collective efficacy
Illustration	
Abuse, parental separation and exposure to drug use	People sharing similar values, trusting one another and feeling able to take action against local problems
Outcomes	
Increased risk of social harm (for example, hard drugs, imprisonment, experience and use of violence)	Reduced risk of crime, regardless of levels of social disadvantage



Monitoring and evaluation

You are strongly encouraged to evaluate your long-term prevention activities to help develop the evidence base and because well-intended interventions can sometimes cause harm.

As a minimum, you should:

- have a clear explanation, for example in the form of a **logic model**, for how an intervention seeks to reduce the risks to a person, family or place as well as what outcomes are expected and why
- monitor these outcomes over time.

Resources

- ↗ [College – Crime reduction toolkit](#)
- ↗ [College – How do you respond to the needs of vulnerable people?](#)
- ↗ [EIF – Early intervention: A guide for frontline police officers and PCSOs](#)
- ↗ [EIF – The police role in early interventions](#)
- ↗ [Public Health Wales – Adverse childhood experiences](#)
- ↗ [Public Health Wales – Adverse childhood experiences \[video\]](#)
- ↗ [YJB – Youth justice resource hub](#)
- ↗ [Project Oracle – Children and youth evidence hub](#)
- ↗ [College – What works briefing: Mentoring interventions to affect juvenile delinquency and associated problems](#)
- ↗ [Home Office – Victims code of practice](#)



4. Promoting the right culture

Select a link for information, practical advice and resources on promoting the right culture.

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Guideline 4: Promoting the right culture

Chief officers should promote an organisational culture that encourages the public to participate in neighbourhood policing. They should take steps to ensure that all police contact with colleagues, partners and the public seeks to build trust and is consistent with procedural justice².


Essential elements include:


- Treating people fairly and with dignity and respect
- Giving people a chance to express their views, listening and taking them into account
- Making impartial decisions and explaining how they were reached
- Being open and honest.

Promoting procedural justice should:

- Lead to officers, staff and volunteers treating the public fairly and with respect
- Improve public confidence in the police
- Increase local capacity by increasing the willingness of communities to help the police, be involved and take greater ownership of problems.

Evidence-base

 Empirical evidence: **good** | moderate | limited

 Practitioner evidence: **available**

² Requiring fair decision making and respectful treatment

Practical advice: Promoting the right culture

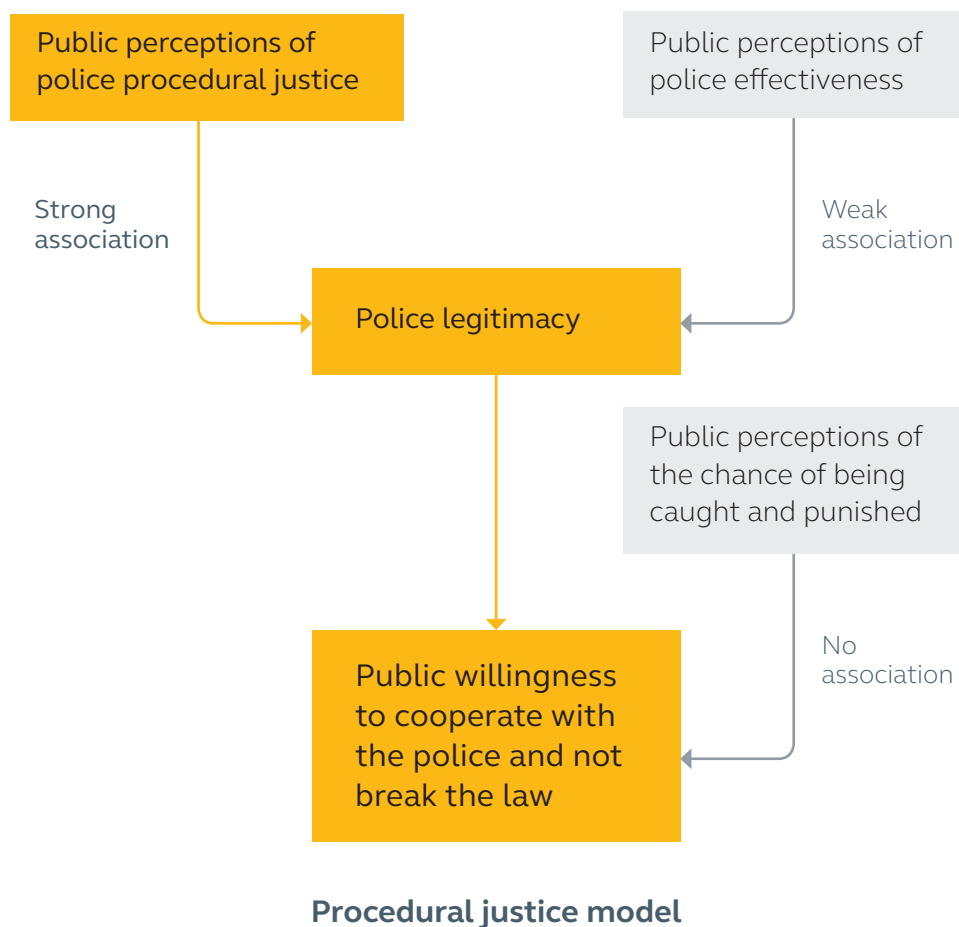
Procedural justice

Policing by consent

When people trust the police and think the **police are legitimate**, they are more likely to cooperate with them and not break the law. They are generally more willing to do things that make the job of the police easier, like:

- report crime
- tell the police about suspicious activity
- give information to the police
- take part in problem-solving activities
- follow instructions from officers.





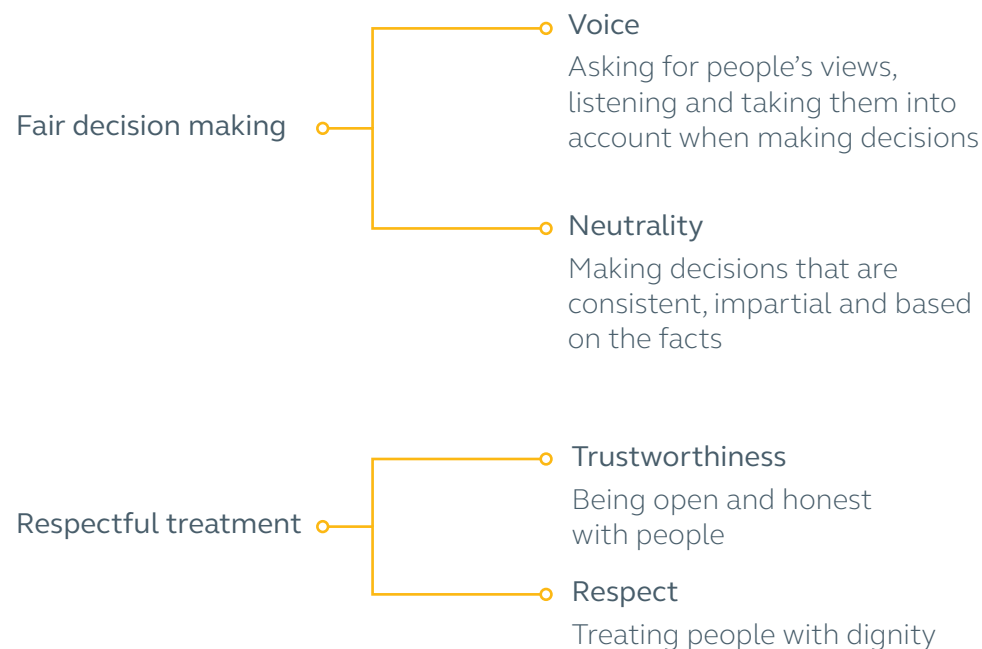
Similar patterns have been found with people who might ordinarily be less trusting of the police. When they see the police as legitimate, they are more likely to support counter terrorism policing and think that problems should not be solved through violence.

Such active public support is essential to neighbourhood policing and should help:

- communities to participate in engagement and problem-solving activities
- **manage critical incidents**
- prevent violent extremism.

Elements

Public perceptions of procedural justice are particularly important when it comes to people seeing the police as legitimate. There are four elements to **procedural justice**, which are consistent with the **Code of Ethics**:



Every contact leaves a trace

Contact that is perceived by the public to be unfair or disrespectful is particularly damaging to police legitimacy. It is more likely to be remembered and talked about than fair and respectful contact because it goes against people's expectations of the police. It can make the work of the police more difficult in the long term if people disengage as a result.

Many police encounters with the public will be seen as fair and respectful but there are likely to be particular issues with:

- people and communities who feel 'over-policed and under-protected'
- highly targeted approaches to law enforcement.

It follows that steps may need to be taken to mitigate the effect of encounters that people feel are unfair, alongside efforts to build legitimacy through positive contact.

Resources

➤ [Center for Court Innovation – What is procedural justice? \[video\]](#)

➤ [College – It's a fair cop? Legitimacy, public cooperation and crime](#)

➤ [College – Satisfaction and confidence: An overview](#)

Communication skills

Training in basic techniques to build rapport and empathy has been shown to improve public perceptions of police contact. Importantly, the use of roleplay scenarios and personalised feedback allowed officers to practice and refine their skills. As such training may be

prohibitively expensive, you are encouraged to develop and test lower cost options.

Care is required when introducing any **procedural justice** initiative. There is a need to recognise and build on people's existing skills and help them manage the most challenging encounters. For example, officers using scripts to ensure they interact with drivers in a procedurally just way during traffic stops have had a positive impact in a few places, but had an adverse impact when the initiative was not implemented well in one force.

Resources

➤ [College – What works in training, behaviour change and implementing guidance](#)

Internal procedural justice

It is important that you and other senior leaders act as role models for procedural justice. With fairness and respect, you can encourage staff to:

- feel empowered to make important decisions
- hold positive attitudes about the public
- value procedural justice in police encounters with the public.

As with the public, experiences of unfairness are likely to have a detrimental effect on the workforce. It is, therefore, important to consider:

- how you handle **organisational change**
- the sources of perceived unfairness in the force (for example,



workload, promotion, complaints and unsatisfactory performance procedures)

- the support provided to officers, staff and volunteers (for example, health and wellbeing)
- how good you and your force are at staff engagement.

Resources

↗ **College – Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing**

↗ **College – What works in organisational change and business improvement**



5. Building analytical capability

Select a link for information, practical advice and resources on building analytical capability.

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Guideline 5: Building analytical capability

Chief officers should ensure there is sufficient analytical capacity and capability necessary for problem-solving.


Essential elements include:


- Officers, staff and volunteers thinking analytically when dealing with problems
- Officers, staff and volunteers accessing appropriate data and tools to carry out their own analysis
- Facilitating access to skilled analysts
- Sharing of data, analysis and analytical resources between police and partners
- Sharing of good practice within forces, across the service and with partners.

Effectively building analytical capacity and capability should:

- Ensure problem-solving activities are based on a good understanding of problems
- Enable the impact and outcomes of responses to be assessed
- Lead to greater efficiencies through sharing resources.

Evidence-base

 Empirical evidence: **good** | moderate | limited

 Practitioner evidence: **available**



Practical advice: Building analytical capability

Analytical capacity and capability

Each stage of the problem-solving process requires some form of analysis to be carried out, such as:

- statistical analysis
- hot spot mapping
- network analysis
- analysis of social media and **big data**.

Frontline practitioners can carry out problem-solving analysis, but may sometimes struggle to find the time or benefit from support. **Step-by-step tools** are available, but can be quite detailed, so additional advice from analysts may be needed.

A lack of dedicated analytical support is widely seen as a major barrier to problem-solving. Problem-solving is more likely to be effective when those on the frontline have access to skilled analysts and analytical tools.



Resources

➤ [POP Center – Crime analysis for problem-solvers in 60 small steps](#)

➤ [POP Center – Problem analysis module](#)

Thinking analytically

Thinking in an analytical way can help officers, staff and volunteers deal with problems and understand their root causes. Example ways of approaching problems with an analytical mind-set include:

- challenging assumptions about:
 - established ways of working
 - the causes of problems
 - where the ‘known’ hot spots are
 - who the perpetrators are likely to be
- developing and testing theories to explain why problems exist
- finding out about the **evidence base**
- taking the initiative to interrogate force systems and other data sources (for example, briefing tools, problem profiles and partnership data).

Analytical tools

Analysts are likely to require access to and training in the **appropriate software** to do their job effectively. It may also be possible for you to make frontline practitioners more self-sufficient by giving them access to tools and apps that automate some analytical processes.

The recognised barriers to implementation include the:

- ongoing cost of software licences
- compatibility of software with force systems
- skills to use software to its full potential.

Resources

➤ [College – Authorised professional practice on analysis](#)

➤ [College – A summary of models and software for prospective crime mapping](#)

➤ [Wikipedia – Statistical software packages](#)

➤ [Wikipedia – Geographic information systems software \(GIS\)](#)

Skilled analysts

A shortage of skilled analysts is often seen as a barrier to implementing problem-solving. To make the best use of the available police and partner resources, you should consider:

- how analysts are tasked, by asking the following questions:
 - Are the right questions being asked?
 - Are tasks too basic, rigid or unfocused?
 - Is performance and intelligence analysis being prioritised over problem-solving analysis?
- providing clarity about the role of analysts
- IT that makes advanced analysis quicker and easier
- ensuring analysts receive appropriate professional development.



You should also encourage analysts to query tasks that are too basic for their skill levels and ensure analytical products are not:

- too narrow in scope
- overly focused on describing problems rather than their underlying causes
- limited in their recommendations for police actions.

There may also be benefits in analysts helping their **colleagues to understand their role** better and what analysis can do through, for example, mentoring.

Sharing data

Without effective **data sharing** between partners, it will be more difficult to develop the detailed problem specifications based on multiple data sources that are needed for effective problem-solving.

It is important, therefore, that you:

- understand the roles, responsibilities and priorities of partners
- work with partners to develop systems and protocols to share data securely
- help overcome any barriers to implementing these systems and protocols.

Sharing practice

There is also a need for frontline practitioners and analytical specialists to be able to **share learning** (for example, analytical

products, evaluations, practice examples) among themselves locally and nationally. Doing so may:

- **encourage innovation**
- help adopt tried and tested practices
- stop ineffective or harmful responses being used
- prevent duplication
- support **professional development**.

You have a role in

- encouraging officers, staff and volunteers to share their knowledge
- developing local systems knowledge sharing.

Nationally, **POLKA** provides a mechanism for sharing practice across the police service.

Resources

- **College – Authorised professional practice on information sharing**
- **Information Commissioner’s Office – Advice and information on police, justice and surveillance**
- **Information Commissioner’s Office – Guide to the law enforcement provisions of the general data protection regulations**
- **College – Policing and crime reduction research map**
- **Knowledge Hub – Global public service community**



6. Developing officers, staff and volunteers

Select a link for information, practical advice and resources on developing officers, staff and volunteers.

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Guideline 6: Developing officers, staff and volunteers

Chief officers should work with the College of Policing to support and equip officers, staff and volunteers to work in neighbourhood policing and ensure they receive learning and continuing professional development on the areas identified in these guidelines.

Essential learning includes:

- Community engagement
- Partnership working
- Prevention
- Problem-solving
- Procedural justice

Effective learning and development should:

- Improve the knowledge and skills of officers, staff and volunteers in neighbourhood policing
- Lead to stronger collaborations with communities and partners.

Evidence-base



Empirical evidence: good | **moderate** | limited



Practitioner evidence: **available**



Practical advice: Developing officers, staff and volunteers

Learning

Classroom training

Classroom training can help ensure people have the knowledge and skills they need to do their job and keep up to date with the latest developments. This type of learning should extend to new and existing officers, staff and volunteers and may need to be refreshed.

Consider involving partners in delivering training, where appropriate, as it may help people to understand local partnership arrangements and develop networks and relationships.

Practice-based learning

While traditional classroom training can improve knowledge, **learning that is integrated** into routine practice is more likely to change behaviour. Community engagement and problem-solving may be particularly suited to this style of learning if people are able to apply their knowledge on the job and learn from their experiences.

In addition to formal learning, practitioners will also need to develop their own knowledge of their local areas. They should also think about their **learning needs** by assessing their own knowledge and skill levels and the demands of the job.

Continuing professional development

You have an important role to play in ensuring that practitioners develop their knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis. Support could include:

- assessing knowledge and skills gaps across the force
- ensuring supervisors discuss the learning needs with their team members
- considering the accreditation of courses and **prior learning**
- making sure neighbourhood policing is reflected in appropriate selection and promotion processes.

Resources

- ↗ **College – Competency and values framework for policing: Overview of framework**
- ↗ **College – Professional development platform**
- ↗ **College – Prior learning accreditation calculator**
- ↗ **College – CPD how: A toolkit**
- ↗ **College – National police promotion framework**
- ↗ **College – Police community support officers: Operational handbook**
- ↗ **COPS Office – Training portal**
- ↗ **POP Center – Learning**




7. Developing and sharing learning


Select a link for information, practical advice and resources on developing and sharing learning.

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Guideline 7: Developing and sharing learning

Evidence-base

 Empirical evidence: good | moderate | **limited**

 Practitioner evidence: **available**

Chief officers should work with the College of Policing, the wider police service, partners and academia to identify and share learning about neighbourhood policing and current threats.

Evidence gaps include:

- How to identify and respond to those people and places that are vulnerable or high risk
- The role of neighbourhood policing in reducing serious harm (eg, violent extremism, organised crime and exploitation)
- The police role in effective early interventions
- How social media can be used to improve visibility and community engagement
- How neighbourhood policing can make communities stronger and more cohesive
- The effectiveness of different approaches to neighbourhood policing.

Developing and sharing this evidence should:

- Support forces to take a more evidence-based approach
- Help the police to work better with partners
- Lead to better integration between specialist units and neighbourhood policing
- Lead to a better understanding of costs and benefits of different approaches and inform decisions about where to invest resources.



Practical advice: Developing and sharing learning

Aim of College research support

As part of its role in building the evidence base in policing, the College provides officers, staff and volunteers with access to specialist hands-on advice and guidance. This support aims to:

- raise awareness of evidence-based policing and enable officers, staff and volunteers to understand and use evidence-based approaches
- build capability and capacity across the police service for evidence-based policing by helping officers, staff and volunteers to understand current practice, review existing evidence, carry out new research and/or evaluate local innovations.

In addition, the College provides a way for officers, staff and volunteers to:

- share knowledge and practice via **POLKA**
- access ‘what works’ evidence via the **crime reduction toolkit**.

Resources

↗ **College – What is evidence-based policing?**

↗ **College – Research support**



Research surgeries

The College holds regular research surgeries to help increase knowledge of research methods and build analytical capacity and capability across the police service. The surgeries provide an opportunity for officers, staff and volunteers to access hands-on advice and guidance from College researchers on how to:

- clarify research questions
- develop a **logic model**
- design and plan a research project
- sample
- gather data
- analyse data
- present results.

Surgeries are held monthly at College sites around the country. You can attend in person or dial-in.

Resources

[↗ College – Research surgeries \(including booking details\)](#)

Research guidance

The College has started to develop a set of guidance materials to support officers, staff and volunteers to carry out their own research. Guidance is currently available on:

- logic models for use when designing an evaluation
- how to carry out a survey
- systematic reviews of the literature.

Resources

[↗ College – Research guidance](#)

Police/academic partnerships

The College works to help create and maintain local, regional and national police/academic partnerships between forces and universities and other research organisations. The aim is to support the development and use of research evidence in policing. The College has previously helped police/academic partnerships through:

- the **police knowledge fund**
- letters of support for funding applications
- peer review of research proposals
- project advisory groups.

Resources

[↗ College – Police/academic partnerships](#)

Bursary scheme

The College's annual bursary scheme supports study at undergraduate and postgraduate levels at an academic institution in the UK. Police officers and staff who are members of the College are eligible to apply for grants of up to £3,000 a year towards tuition fees, for up to two years of study, with a maximum award of £6,000 per student. The study programme must include a research component, for example, a module on social research methods.



Resources

➤ [College – Bursary scheme](#)

➤ [College – Membership](#)

Research fairs

Research fairs are a structured but informal way for forces to match their research requirements with available external resources from universities and other research organisations. The fair involves:

- the police providing information about their knowledge gaps, research priorities and available data sources
- universities and other research organisations expressing an interest in undertaking the research at no additional cost to the police in return for access to data.

Research fairs also give forces the opportunity to develop local academic partnerships and to raise awareness of universities' research expertise and courses for continuing professional development purposes.

The College is able to support a small number of research fairs across the country in order to help build forces' capability to start and continue such activities in the future.

Resources

➤ [College – Research fairs](#)

Research map

The College's research map provides details of ongoing policing-related research. The map aims to increase opportunities for collaboration and help forces to make contact with researchers working on topics of interest to them.

Resources

➤ [College – Research map](#)

Evidence-based policing champions

The College has developed a network of evidence champions to promote evidence-based policing and to share ideas and knowledge across forces. It will enable forces to support each other in their efforts to embed **evidence-based policing**, through discussion and collaboration.

Resources

➤ [College – Evidence champions](#)



About the College

We're the professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales. Our purpose is to provide those working in policing with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public and secure public trust.

college.police.uk



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