

ANNUAL REPORT

Hertfordshire Independent Stop and Search Community Scrutiny Panel

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

June 2023

Chair Foreword



As the newly elected Chair of the Hertfordshire Independent Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel, it is my pleasure to introduce this important annual report to you, the community.

The use of Stop and Search is an important police power. It is an effective tool in detecting and preventing crime. Done well, it can enhance trust and imbue confidence in the public.

Presently there is an ongoing national discussion about how we are policed. Baroness Louise Casey's recent report¹ into the Metropolitan Police service was damning, including on their use of stop and search. Consequently, no force can afford to be complacent about delivering the high standards expected by the public, so vital in ensuring that the police retain the public's confidence and trust.

It is the role of our Panel to support the Police and Crime Commissioner to discharge his statutory duty to hold the Chief Constable to account by providing independent scrutiny of stop and search incidents. We provide independent scrutiny and feedback on the appropriate, proportionate, and ethical use of stop and search powers within national and local statutory frameworks (PACE Code A, College of Policing's Authorised Policing Practice). We also support the Constabulary to maintain and improve standards by making recommendations on their procedures and practices through our review and evaluation of records and data, including body worn video footage.

The Panel represents the people of Hertfordshire. Currently, it is made up of 24 volunteer members of the public, people just like you! We all approach the role with passion and enthusiasm, we are fair minded and display attention to detail. Some of us also bring our own lived experience of being stopped and searched. The report outlines our ambition to expand the Panel's membership and recruit younger members from across the county, particularly from communities which are less well represented. Training is provided, including the opportunity for Panel Members to accompany officers on a Ride Along to observe front line police work. It is a great opportunity to represent our community and work with the Constabulary on an important police power. If you are interested in applying, please see page 10.

This report provides further context and detail around the number of stop and search records we have reviewed in the past year. It highlights the trends and data sets we monitor from across the county's ten Community Safety Partnerships. We have also detailed how we 'dip sample' records to ensure unfettered and impartial access to stop and search records. This is important because the process is one that the Panel must remain confident is transparent and fit for purpose. The Panel also reviews the Constabulary's use of Section 60 authorisations, of which there were four this year.

During 2022 the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) commissioned an independent Health Check to examine the governance and operation of the Panel. So, we too are rightly subject to scrutiny! This annual report summarises the key findings and recommendations

¹ [The Baroness Casey Review | Metropolitan Police](#)

from the Health Check. Supported by the OPCC, we plan to implement those recommendations over the coming months.

One key area identified in the Health Check report, was that we need to expand the panel to include more diversity, this includes attracting more younger people and encouraging participation from underrepresented groups from the wider community.

The Commissioner recently commissioned the University of Hertfordshire to undertake research to understand whether there is any evidence of Stop and Search in Hertfordshire being used in a discriminatory way. In Hertfordshire a black person is four times more likely to be stopped and searched than a white person². The Panel welcomes this approach to better understand disproportionality. We look forward to working with the Commissioner and OPCC in implementing any recommendations which may arise from the research.

On behalf of the Panel, I would like to thank the staff at the OPCC. The team have gone above and beyond, working extremely hard to organise our meetings, manage the technology, as well as provide the communication, support and data management needed for the panel to conduct thorough scrutiny. All this alongside the extraordinary effort required to support the ongoing Health Check process.

Finally, I would also like to thank all the Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel Volunteers, for their commitment, care, and consistent due diligence over the last twelve months. I would also like to thank the current Vice Chair, Mohammad Islam Ruman and Data Champion, Alexander Allen, who have provided much needed support and expertise to both me and the Panel.

The Panel and I look forward to a continued professional and supportive relationship with the Constabulary including the many officers and staff who supply the data and information we require as a panel to undertake effective scrutiny.

Demitrius Nurse

Chair of the Hertfordshire Independent Stop and Search Community Scrutiny Panel

² See section 8 (pages 26-28) of the main report.

Police and Crime Commissioner's Foreword



External scrutiny is an important part of police legitimacy. As I set out in my Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan last year, done well scrutiny can provide opportunities for the police to understand communities' concerns and where appropriate take steps to improve policies, procedures, and practices. As Commissioner I have asked the Independent Stop and Search Community Panel to support me in the discharging of my statutory duties.

The Stop and Search Panel is now in its eighth year and continues to go from strength to strength. I am delighted that over the last year their work has been recognised by both His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS)³, and the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC). HMICFRS have also asked the Panel to offer peer support to another force who are looking to strengthen their own scrutiny function. All of this is testimony to the maturity and quality of the scrutiny the Panel first and foremost offer Hertfordshire Constabulary. I know that the Constabulary value highly the work of the Panel and I am pleased to note the professional and constructive working relationship between the Panel and Constabulary. This results in both better scrutiny and policing for those who live, work and study in Hertfordshire.

Nationally, the spotlight this year has once again been shone on the ethical behaviour and conduct of police officers, notably by Baroness Louise Casey's recent report into the Metropolitan Police. For Hertfordshire, as for all forces, this is an opportunity to review again the culture of our service and the impact that this has on public confidence in policing. I personally take confidence in the findings presented by the Panel in this report, which shows that for the second year running there has been a reduction in the number of stop and searches undertaken with an improved ratio of both arrests and positive outcome rates. This suggests that the power is being used both legally and legitimately.

As is the case for many forces, Hertfordshire's data suggests that there is disproportionality in the use of stop and search across different communities. As I stated last year, it is vital that here in Hertfordshire we understand whether this is used in a discriminatory way so that I can take any necessary actions with the Constabulary to reduce this. In February, I awarded the University of Hertfordshire a research contract to explore whether there is evidence of any potential discrimination by officers. I am pleased that the Panel have welcomed this evidence based approach to better understanding the issue and I look forward to discussing the findings and any recommendations with them later in the year.

I note that over the twelve-month period, the Panel have scrutinised 339 records, 4.88% of the number of stop and searches which have been undertaken. Their position of confidence is 66.1%, in line with their position of confidence of 66% last year. The Panel have increased the amount of

³ PEEL 2021/22 An Inspection of Hertfordshire Constabulary, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service, p.10 <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-assessment-2021-22-hertfordshire/>

body worn video footage they have viewed. Whilst on balance they commented positively on officer conduct, I note that there was one incident of concern regarding officer language. When the Panel raise an issue such as this, feedback is given to the officer concerned and training is offered as appropriate. I am pleased to note that from May 2023 there has been a group dedicated to viewing footage at each monthly meeting, which should increase the Panel's scrutiny of BWV further.

I have also been pleased to note the Panel's commitment to implementing the recommendations from the Health Check. Their refreshed work to diversify the Panel, including to attract younger people as well as those from communities which are less well represented is important. Recruiting from these demographics has always been challenging and I know that this is an issue in which the Panel share my ambition and are taking a lead on addressing.

I never underestimate the time and effort which all Panel Members devote to their role. As unpaid volunteers they meet monthly, and I am grateful for their commitment. I would also like to thank Demitrius Nurse, the newly elected Chair, Mohammad Islam-Ruman, Vice Chair and Alexander Allan, who served as both Vice Chair and Data Champion, for their leadership of the Panel over the last year.

I look forward to working with the whole Panel over the coming year as the Health Check recommendations are implemented. I believe that this will enhance an already strong scrutiny function for the benefit of our whole Hertfordshire community.

David Lloyd

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Constabulary's Foreword



It has been my pleasure to work with the Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel again this year as the Force's lead officer for the Use of Police Powers. The Panel provides the force and I with a vital independent view and critical challenge on a topic area which is often sensitive and potentially divisive in communities.

As a police officer I am acutely aware that any misuse of the power to stop and search can have an impact on wider confidence in policing. It could also undermine our legitimacy with the public, the very bedrock on which policing by consent is based.

Over the last twelve months in Hertfordshire, we have seen the number of searches carried out fall 9% from 7,461 in the same period 2021/2022 to 6,949, with an arrest rate of 18% and positive outcome rate of 31%, both increasing by 2.3% and 1% respectively. Whilst we have no targets for stop and search, we do focus on ensuring that we use these powers in an intelligence led and proportionate way, so a reduction in our volume with increases in our arrest and positive outcomes rates provide some positive indicators.

The work of the Panel provides the Force with additional qualitative measures as they state the level of confidence that they have in our use of stop and search. Use of the power must be both lawful and recorded accurately as well as undertaken in a manner which accords the person being stopped with respect and dignity.

Over the last year, there has been a lot of attention nationally on wider police powers around 'strip search' (the removal of more than jackets, outer clothing and gloves), particularly regarding young people following the 'Child Q' case in London. In Hertfordshire we have worked with partners to review our practices and made a number of changes to our Standard Operating Procedures. We have taken into consideration the Children's Commissioner's recent recommendations to the Home Office and, where appropriate, have adopted some of these in advance of any legislative change that may occur.⁴ For example, the authorising officer in Hertfordshire must now be an Inspector rather than a Sergeant.

Here in Hertfordshire, we only see a small number of these cases, with just 12 (0.17% of all searches) in the last year. Moving forward, it has been agreed that all child strip search cases will be seen by the Panel. This is in line with our approach to use of Section 60 of the Police and Criminal Justice Act 1994 (the power to search any person found in a location in anticipation of violence). The Panel's independent scrutiny in areas of concern to the public is another check to ensure that we are using our powers in a considered, proportionate and lawful manner at all times.

Finally, I am pleased that the work of the Panel in holding the Force to account has been positively noted as good practice by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service

⁴ <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/strip-search-of-children-in-england-and-wales/>

(HMICFRS) in their 2022 PEEL inspection⁵. The Panel has also been recognised by the National Police Chief's Council. They have highlighted the Panel as a leading example within the National Police Race action plan, giving it 'Ice Breaker' status, as forces up and down the country make real efforts to bridge the confidence gap in policing across the black community.

I look forward to working with the Panel in the year ahead as we seek to improve still further our use of stop and search as part of our Prevention First approach to keeping people safe across Hertfordshire.

Chief Superintendent Dean Patient

Chair of Hertfordshire Constabulary's Use of Police Powers Board

⁵ PEEL 2021/22 An Inspection of Hertfordshire Constabulary, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service, p.10 <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-assessment-2021-22-hertfordshire/>

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Findings

- Overall, there was a drop in the use of stop search from 7,461 last year to 6,949 this year, which is a reduction of 9%.⁶
- Over the same period, the positive outcome rate for the County increased from 28% to 31%.
- There has also been a small improvement on the stop to arrest ratio from 16.4% to 18%.
- Eight Community Safety Partnerships have seen an improvement in their positive outcome rate. Only East Herts and Dacorum have observed a decrease compared to 2021/2022.
- Welwyn Hatfield had the highest positive outcome rate (for all search types) of all CSPs at 38%.
- 339 stop and search records were dip sampled this year out of a possible 6,949 (4.88 %). This is a slight improvement on last year when 4.5% of records were sampled.
- The Panel's position of confidence in the stop and search forms was 66.1%. This is in line with last year when the Panel were confident in 66% of the records.

Key achievements

- The Panel have continued their scrutiny role through monthly meetings.
- The Panel have also reviewed four Section 60 authorisations and reviewed 18 pieces of BWV footage throughout the year.
- 11 Panel members supported the Constabulary with additional scrutiny of 14 special operation records and 4 BWV clips at an extraordinary meeting in March 2023.
- Many of the Panel have taken up different training opportunities, including refresher training, observation of officer training, stop and search role playing with Police Cadets and Ride Alongs with the Constabulary.
- The Panel have reviewed the Constabulary's Deep Dive report into disproportionality in St Albans as well as records of Under 18 strip searches.
- 21 Sergeants have observed various Panel meetings over the year. Their feedback has been very positive, and they have all stated that they found it a beneficial experience.
- Panel members have participated in a Health Check, an Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC) commissioned review of the governance and operation of the Panel.

Recommendations for the year ahead (April 2023 – March 2024)

- To continue ongoing work in the areas of membership, governance, training and review of procedures and criteria by implementing recommendations from the Health Check to further develop the Panel as a model of good practice for Stop and Search Scrutiny, including:

⁶ The Panel meets every month to review the preceding month's activity and therefore, this report covers the Constabulary's stop and search activity from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023.

- Expanding the Panel's membership by aiming to recruit from a younger demographic as well as from communities that are less well represented, particularly those who are most likely to have contact with the police.
- Refreshing the governance arrangements of the Panel including the Terms of Reference and Panel Member Profile.
- Developing an updated training programme for all Panel members.
- Developing a set of Key Performance Indicators for the Panel.
- Aligning the Panel's assessment criteria with the Use of Force Panel's RAG rating, including criteria around incivility for example, officer language, behaviour and attitudes.
- Expanding and enhancing the scrutiny process for BWV.
- Asking Panel Members to be Ambassadors for the Panel by advertising their work and helping to grow the public's confidence in Hertfordshire Police.
- Work with the OPCC and Constabulary as appropriate to consider any findings from the University of Hertfordshire's research into disproportionality in stop and search.
- In April 2023, the Panel agreed that moving forward, they will scrutinise all strip searches of a child. This will be effective immediately with an item added to the agenda for discussion as the need arrives.
- In April 2023, the Panel also agreed to move away from the biannual approach to reviewing complaints data to a quarterly approach.

Find out more about becoming a Member of the Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel

We are now recruiting for new Members! As a Panel Member you would:

- **Attend at least six of the twelve Panel meetings each year.** Meetings last for 2.5 hours and are currently held mostly in person, during the day, across the county. However, our ambition is to make Panel Meetings more flexible, and we are currently scoping evening and online options.
- **Be offered training to support your scrutiny,** including the opportunity to go on a Ride Along with police officers.
- **Be paid travel expenses.** Whilst this is a voluntary role the OPCC will meet any reasonable travel expenses incurred by Panel members.

We welcome applications from anyone who lives, works or studies in Hertfordshire. The OPCC is particularly interested to hear from younger people and those from Black, Asian and all Ethnic communities.

If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a Panel Member, please email Susan McNeill: susan.mcneill@herts-pcc.gov.uk

1. Introduction

This report provides a summary of the work undertaken by the Hertfordshire Independent Stop and Search Community Scrutiny Panel (hereafter referred to as the 'Panel') between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023⁷.

It is the role of the Panel to scrutinise and provide feedback on the actions of Hertfordshire Constabulary in relation to stop and search, to ensure transparency and enhance public confidence in the Constabulary's ethical and lawful use of stop and search powers.

This report reflects the work of the Panel's scrutiny function, including the random sampling of stop and search records, monthly and trend summary data, body worn video footage (BWV)⁸ and Section 60 authorisations⁹. It also considers the Panel's development over the year as well as outlining next steps to further enhance their scrutiny function.

This report uses the most recent data which is available to the Constabulary. In March 2023, the Constabulary updated PowerBI to reflect the Census 2021 data and subsequent estimates which ONS produced in 2023. This has been applied for all years back to 2019.

Since last year's annual report was written in March 2022, PowerBI has been updated and the total number of stop searches for 21/22 have increased from 7461 to 7573. The data for 2019/20 and 2020/21 have also been updated to reflect the latest available figures.¹⁰

A glossary is included on page 38 to explain some of the terminology used in the report.

⁷ The Panel meets every month to review the preceding month's activity. Therefore, this report covers the Constabulary's stop and search activity from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023. It also includes an extraordinary meeting of the Panel on 24 March 2023 to review special operation records from January 2023.

⁸ Body worn video (BWV) is camera footage that refers to video captured by cameras worn by police officers and Special Constables.

⁹ Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 gives officers the right to search individuals within a specified locality, without any grounds for suspicion, in circumstances in which incidents involving serious violence may take place.

¹⁰ This is due to additional records being uploaded to the system after the data for a period has been compiled.

Profile of Hertfordshire

- Hertfordshire is a large county stretching from Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire to the north to the outskirts of London in the south. It also borders Buckinghamshire to the west and Essex to the east.
- Hertfordshire has a population of 1,200,620. 28.2% of residents are from an ethnic minority compared to 26.5% in England as a whole.
- Urban areas make up around a third of Hertfordshire by area and account for around 89% of the population. There is no single dominant large urban centre. In total, there are 40 settlements with 4,000 or more residents in each.
- Hertfordshire Constabulary have a Safer Neighbourhood Teams which operates in each of the ten Community Safety Partnerships. These represent the ten local district and borough councils: Dacorum, East Herts, North Herts, Welwyn and Hatfield, Broxbourne, Hertsmere, Watford, Three Rivers, St Albans and Stevenage.
- Hertfordshire has lower crime levels than the national average: 64.7 crimes per 1,000 residents compared to 84.3 in England (Jan 2022 – Feb 2023). However, levels of antisocial behaviour incidents are higher: 20.7 per 1,000 residents compared to 16.4 in England (Jan 2022 – Feb 2023).

See [HertsInsight](#) (ONS Census 2021 Data, April 2023) for references and more information.

2. Background

National Guidance

In 2014, the then Home Secretary introduced the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme (BUSS) in response to concerns about police compliance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 Code of Practice A¹¹. The intention was to significantly reduce the use of stop and search; to encourage more intelligence led stop and searches; and to improve stop to arrest ratios. BUSS continues to be in use and was last updated by the Home Office in 2021¹².

In 2016 the College of Policing published their Authorised Policing Practice (APP) for Stop and Search¹³. The APP is based largely on the provisions of Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Code A, alongside the BUSS and recommendations from reviews of stop and search carried out in recent years by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children. Mandatory content in the APP that is based on Code A is legally binding. The APP was last updated in 2018.

Stop and Search in Hertfordshire

In August 2014 Hertfordshire Constabulary signed up to the original BUSS reforms, including measures to allow stop and search records to be scrutinised by community representatives through independent external scrutiny. Recognising the need for independent scrutiny and oversight, the Constabulary approached the OPCC to establish an external independent Scrutiny Panel. Following scoping work in November 2014, the Police and Crime Commissioner (hereafter referred to as 'the Commissioner') set up the independent countywide scrutiny Panel in 2015.

The Panel's remit was to provide a voice for community concerns; and to help inform and influence police training around stop and search practices. The Panel today provides clear and transparent information for both Constabulary and community benefit; and enhances public confidence in police performance. This was born out in the HMICFRS Peel Inspection, published in February 2023, which found that the Constabulary has effective independent panels that scrutinise the Constabulary's use of stop and search¹⁴.

3. Health Check

In May 2022, the OPCC commissioned an independent review of the governance and operations of both the Stop and Search Panel and the Use of Force Panel. Over the summer and autumn, Att10tive Social Enterprise¹⁵ undertook a Health Check of the two OPCC's scrutiny Panels to

¹¹ In 2014 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) reported that 27 per cent of the stop and search records they examined did not contain reasonable grounds to search people, even though many of the records had been endorsed by supervising officers.

¹² [Best use of stop and search scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-use-of-stop-and-search-scheme)

¹³ [Stop and search | College of Policing](https://www.collegeofpolicing.org.uk/authorised-practice/stop-and-search)

¹⁴ PEEL 2021/22 An Inspection of Hertfordshire Constabulary, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service, p.10 <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/peel-assessment-2021-22-hertfordshire/>

¹⁵ Att10tive Social Enterprise <https://att10tive.com/>

support further improvement in the scrutiny undertaken, the representativeness of the Panels, and how well-equipped Panel members are to undertake their functions. Along with a review of the national literature, the Health Check included workshops with both Panels as well as interviews with Constabulary, OPCC and Panel members.

The Health Check report was finalised in January 2023 and circulated to both Panels for their consideration. The Health Check concluded that in Hertfordshire the foundations and framework are in place to provide effective scrutiny and oversight of policing powers. It identified areas of good practice and made recommendations for further areas of development. A joint extraordinary meeting was held in early May 2023 to ensure that, where appropriate, there is consistency in the implementation of the recommendations. Both the new Chair and Panel see this work as a key priority for the year ahead.

4. Panel membership and leadership

At its inception in 2015, the Panel had six members, but over time, additional recruitment has been undertaken to expand the membership, establishing, where possible, a diverse membership from a variety of backgrounds.

As of April 2023, the Panel has a membership of 24 volunteers, all of whom live, work or study in Hertfordshire. During the year 10 volunteers retired from the Panel and one new member was inducted. The Panel is keen to increase their numbers and particularly want to recruit new members from both a younger demographic as well as from communities that are currently less well represented. As part of the Health Check recommendations, a coordinated approach to recruitment for both the Stop and Search and Use of Force Panels is being developed. This work started in June 2023.

Wherever possible, the Panel seeks to reflect the demographics within Hertfordshire. One Panel member preferred not to provide their personal data. Six Panel members have not submitted returns. The below breakdown reflects the returns of 18 Panel members is as follows:

Category	Panel	2021 Census ¹⁶
Gender		
Female	33.3%	51%
Male	61.1%	49%
Prefer not to say	5.6%	
Age		
16 – 24	0%	9.4%
25 – 39	0%	19.9%
40 – 54	16.7%	21.3%
55 – 70	50%	17.2%
70+	28.7%	12.5%
Prefer not to say	5.6%	

¹⁶ ONS Census 2021 Hertfordshire: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/areas/E10000015/>

Self-defined Ethnicity		
White	72.2%	81.8%
Asian/Asian British	5.6%	8.6%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	11.1%	3.8%
Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African	5.6%	3.7%
Other Ethnic Group	0%	2.1%
Prefer not to say	5.6%	

In October 2022, the Panel elected Demitrius Nurse as Interim Chair of the Panel. In April 2023, Demitrius' position as Chair was made permanent. He will serve a term of two years in the first instance to April 2025. Mohammad Islam-Ruman continues to serve as Vice Chair. Alexander Allen served as a second Vice Chair until April 2023. He has since stepped down from the role but continues to act as Data Champion for the Panel.

5. Panel Training

Upon joining the Panel, each member undertakes a training session on PACE Code A, as well as the Panel's role more generally. This enables them to understand police powers and to assist in developing the ability to critically challenge and scrutinise Hertfordshire Constabulary's stop and search data.

Additional training and information are provided throughout the year as needed or requested. All Panel members are invited to participate in the Constabulary's Ride Along scheme. As part of this, Panel members may have the opportunity to see 'real-life' stop and search encounters with frontline officers. Throughout the year, Panel members have reflected positively on this experience and how it can deepen their understanding of operational policing. One Panel member commented:

"As part of my training for the Panel I joined officers in my local force on a Ride Along. This gave me a real insight as to what the officers have to deal with on a daily basis and also gave me a much deeper understanding on the time constraints when writing up the stop & search records. It was a really valuable experience."

In the autumn, the Panel were invited by the Constabulary to attend both the theory and practical sessions of the Stop and Search training for Cadets. During the latter sessions, members participated in stop and search role play scenarios with the trainees. One Panel member observed:

"The training was extremely interesting, covering relevant legislation for Stop and Search, public disorder, riot and affray as well as drug possession and supply. This was followed by practical demonstrations of exactly how to conduct a search, whilst remaining in control. The tutor was very good."

All agreed that this was a valuable shared learning experience and the trainers have extended an invitation to the Panel to come along to future sessions for the next cohort of Cadets.

Later in November, the Constabulary ran frontline officer training sessions for the Panel so that they could experience at first hand the refresher training which had been rolled out across Hertfordshire. Again, Panel members gave very positive feedback about the value of these sessions:

“The online training for Panel members was very good and worked well since it was a small group, with some excellent discussion. A presentation based on new sergeant training was used as a ‘refresher’ for Panel members, covering issues such as: grounds for suspicion, legal bases and powers for search (national models), and the need for good records to be kept. Lively discussion followed amongst Panel members, on such issues as unconscious bias, drug use, strip search and lack of co-operation by suspects. Some case studies were used, and the training overall was both extremely interesting and helpful.”

The Health Check recommended that a new training offer is developed to widen the current approach to include more information and guidance on topics such as disproportionality, complaints, and unconscious bias. This was discussed at the joint extraordinary meeting in May and a new training programme is under development.

What is a Stop and Search?

When an officer stops you or your vehicle and searches you, your vehicle, or anything you are carrying.

Powers to stop and search must be used fairly, responsibly, with respect for people being searched and without unlawful discrimination.

What is the purpose of Stop and Search?

To enable officers to eliminate or confirm suspicions that an individual may be in possession of stolen or prohibited items, without exercising their power of arrest, and to provide safeguards for those who are searched.

What is reasonable suspicion?

Reasonable grounds for suspicion is the legal test which an officer must satisfy before they can stop and detain individuals or vehicles to search them. Reasonable grounds for suspicion will depend on the circumstances of each case.

There must be an objective basis for that suspicion to be based on facts, information, and/or intelligence that are relevant to the likelihood of finding an article of a certain kind. Reasonable suspicion can never be supported on the basis of personal factors. It must rely on intelligence or information about, or some specific behaviour by, the person concerned.

An officer has powers to stop and search you if they have 'reasonable grounds' to suspect you're carrying:

- illegal drugs
- a weapon
- stolen property
- something which could be used to commit a crime.

6. Meetings

Terms of Reference (ToR) are in place to guide the Panel¹⁷. The ToR are currently being reconsidered as part of the Health Check implementation and will be updated as a priority recommendation in summer 2023.

A Chief Inspector, Inspector or Sergeant from Hertfordshire Constabulary's Strategy, Performance and Transformation department is present at all meetings to answer operationally specific questions from the Panel. In addition, the Chief Inspectors of each district are invited to attend meetings during which stop and search records and BWV footage from their areas are reviewed.

¹⁷ ToR are available on the Police and Crime Commissioners' website: <https://www.hertscommissioner.org/getting-involved/how-to-get-involved/stop-and-search-scrutiny-panel/>

They are accountable for any issues and concerns identified that are linked to their own district area.

The Panel meets monthly to review the preceding month’s activity and therefore, this report covers its activities between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, correlating to the Constabulary’s stop and search activity from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023.

Whilst Panel meetings follow an established process, they continue to evolve, reflecting the maturity of the Panel who are open to adaptation as their work progresses. The main format is standing items (welcome, apologies, minutes and actions) followed by scrutiny exercises. Each month the Panel dip-sample a selection of stop and search records. They may also discuss the monthly summary data as well as scrutinise BWV footage, Section 60 authorisations and complaints¹⁸. Following the Children’s Commissioner’s recent report¹⁹, from May 2023 this now also includes strip searches of a child. Appendix C sets out the scrutiny processes which are undertaken at Panel meetings.

Countywide data was reviewed at each monthly meeting. Additionally, the following themes or scrutiny were undertaken:

Scrutiny undertaken over the last year	
May 2022: Written Deep Dive report into disproportionality in St Albans	December 2022: Section 60, Ware
June 2022: Under 18 strip searches and Section 60, Stevenage	March 2023: Section 60, Oxhey
July 2022: Section 60, Stevenage	March 2023: Special Operation (Extraordinary Meeting)

There is an established feedback loop between the Panel and the Constabulary. This ensures that the work and views of the Panel have a direct and meaningful impact on the performance of officers on the ground. Following each meeting, all the Panel’s scrutiny feedback is circulated to the relevant senior officers in the Constabulary, including the Chief Inspectors of the Local Policing teams and Professional Standards Department. This feedback is used to not only provide direct feedback to individual officers, but to also inform future training activities. In cases involving serious misconduct, procedures have been developed to enable the Panel to refer the incident directly into Professional Standards Department (PSD). Appendix D sets out the feedback loop between the Panel and the Constabulary.

7. Key Findings

Stop to arrest ratio

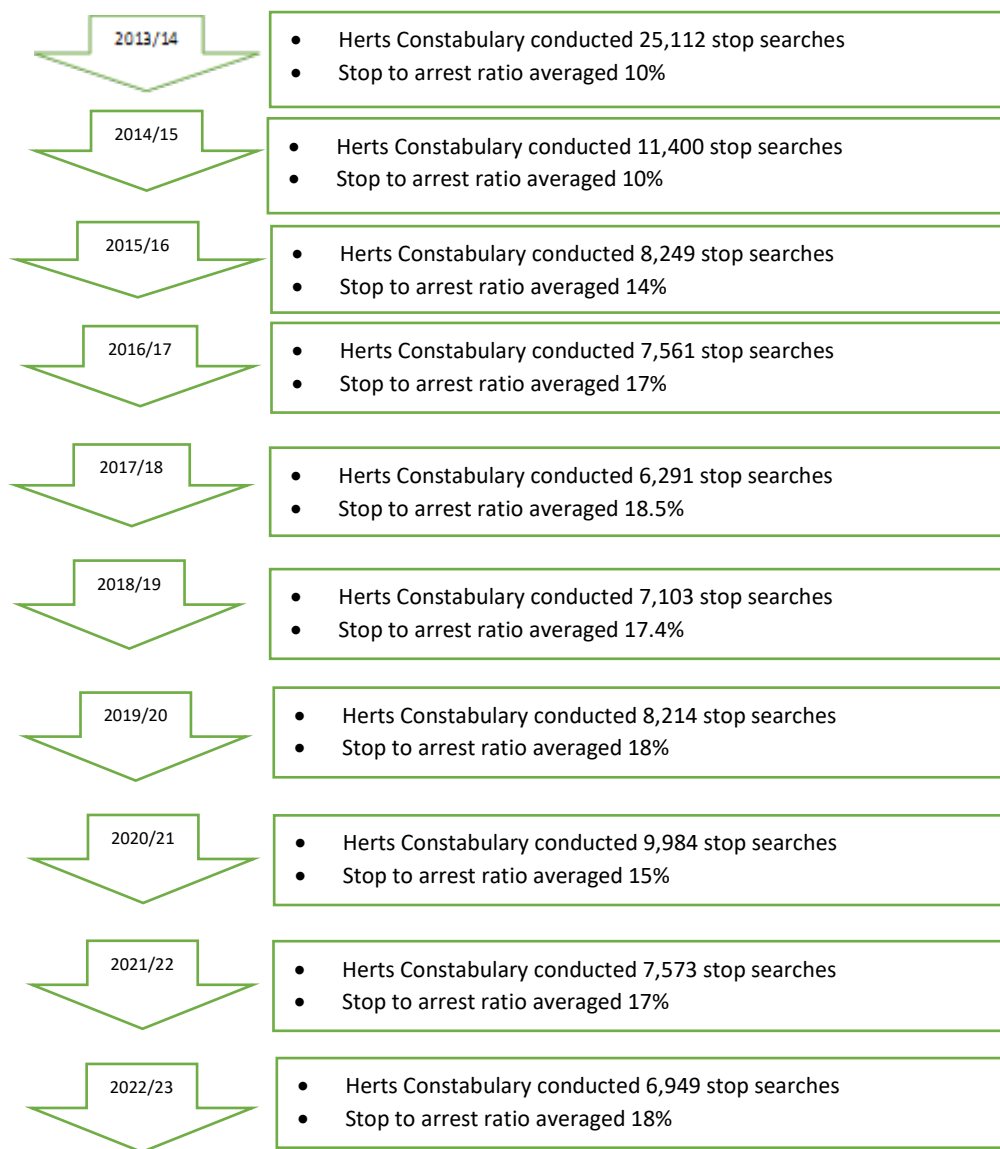
In 2014, like all Constabularies, Hertfordshire introduced a package of reforms as recommended by the then Home Secretary to ensure stop and searches were more intelligence-led and would

¹⁸ Further details can be found in Appendix C.

¹⁹ [Strip search of children in England and Wales | Children's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/reports-and-publications/strip-search-of-children-in-england-and-wales/)

improve the stop to arrest ratio²⁰. Figure 1 shows how since 2010, the number of stop and searches in Hertfordshire has reduced at the same time as the stop to arrest ratio has improved²¹. During this reporting period, Hertfordshire Constabulary conducted 6,949 searches and of those, 1,249 resulted in an arrest (18%). Hertfordshire rank fifth of eight forces within their Most Similar Force area, as defined by the Home Office (see Appendix A).

Figure 1 Stop and Search arrest ratio in Hertfordshire (2013 - 2022/23)²²



²⁰ <https://www.hertscommissioner.org/contentassets/598c5fc72fc449b3a81afd6eae5f1f5/stop-and-search-briefing-paper-for-police-and-crime-panel-2015.pdf>

²¹ For 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 the number of stop searches and stop to arrest ratios have been updated to reflect the latest available figures. In March 2021, Home Office updated the police data requirements in Stop and Search Guidance: Annual Data Return 150. This stated that if an arrest results from a stop and search encounter, it should be recorded. This has resulted in an uplift to the stop to arrest ratios.

²² Reforms to national guidance at the beginning of the 2010s saw a significant reduction in the use of stop and search in the early years of the decade.

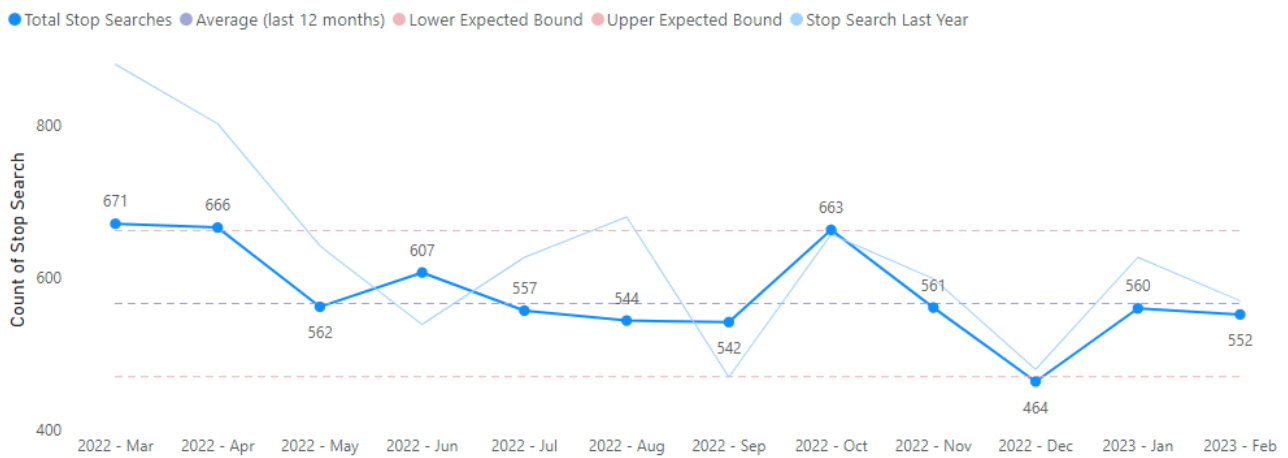
Number of searches

The number of searches conducted per month has fluctuated between a low of 463 in December 2022 and a high of 671 in March 2023, averaging 578 per month. Figure 2 also shows some seasonal correlation with the pattern of stop searches last year, particularly from October - February.

The number of searches conducted in the last twelve months are all within the Constabulary’s modelled upper and lower bounds.

Figure 2 – Stop and Search by month (2022 – 2023 compared to preceding year)

Stop Search by Month



There are a range of factors which can lead to a stop and search taking place. These can include reports from members of the public, police activity in the vicinity of a crime, a Section 60 being put in place and credible, specific and recent intelligence that crime is affecting a defined area.

How does Hertfordshire compare to other areas?

Compared to the Most Similar Force Group*, Hertfordshire is fourth out of eight forces in terms of number of stop and searches over the last year.

Within the Most Similar Force Group, Hampshire has a comparable number of average monthly stops (590.4 compared to Hertfordshire’s 574.7). Hertfordshire has a 3.88% better arrest rate. However, for overall positive outcomes, Hertfordshire compares slightly less favourably, 3.16% lower than Hampshire (27.23% compared to Hertfordshire’s 24.07%).

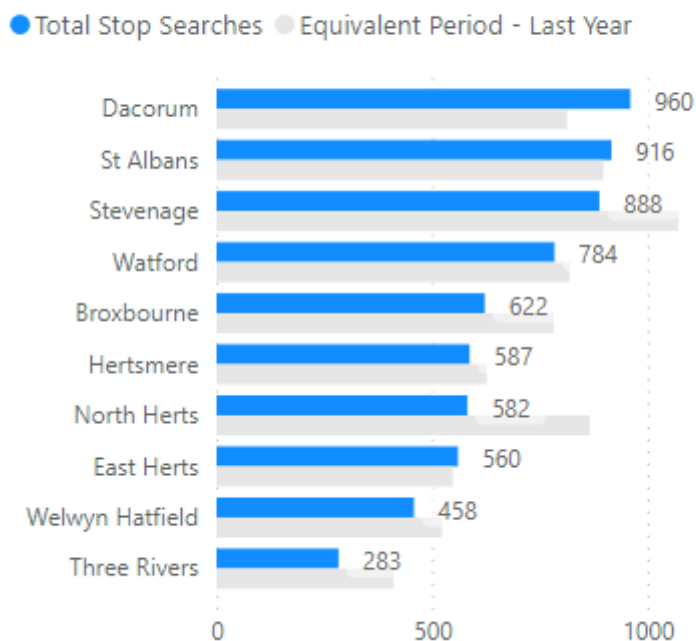
For more information, see Appendix A: Comparison of Stop and Searches figures from Hertfordshire and Most Similar Force areas (1 March 2022 – 28 February 2023)

**Most Similar Force Groups are determined by the Home Office. They are groups of police force areas that have been found to be the most like each other based on an analysis of demographic, social and economic characteristics relating to crime.*

Figure 3 shows the breakdown of stop searches across the county’s ten Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). This year Dacorum has undertaken the largest number of stop searches (960) although this is still less than the 1,071 which were undertaken in Stevenage last year. Three Rivers remains the CSP with the least amount of stop searches this year, 282 (down from 411 last year).

Figure 3 – Stop and Search Volumes by CSP (2022 – 2023 compared to preceding year)

Stop Search Volumes by CSP



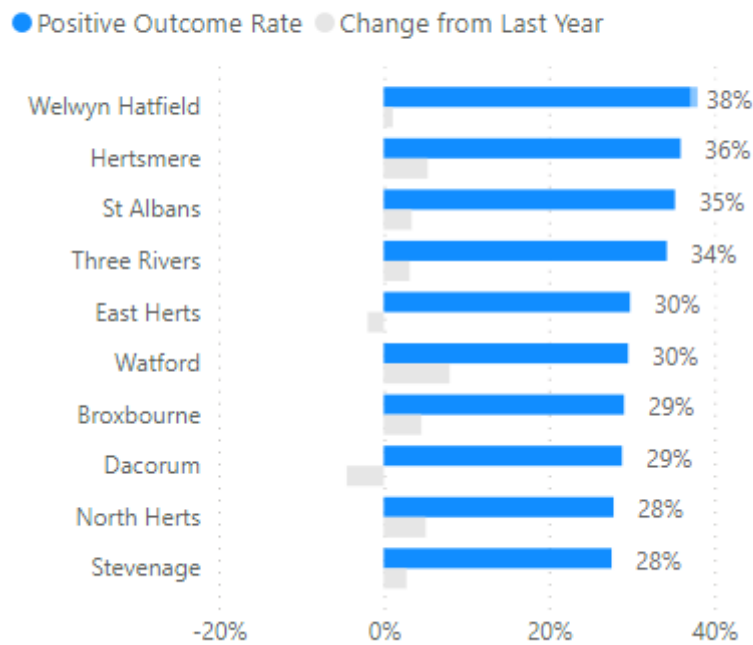
Positive Outcome Rate

Positive outcomes include arrests, as well as out of court disposals, such as community resolutions or conditional cautions, which negate the need for individuals to be formally processed through custody suites. The average positive outcome rate for the year was 31%. This was up from 30.0 % in 20/21 and 28.0% in 19/20.

Figure 4 breaks down the positive outcome rate for the county’s ten CSPs. Of these, only East Herts and Dacorum, have observed a small decrease in positive outcome rates compared to 2021/2022. East Herts is down 1.9% and Dacorum is down 4.5%.

Figure 4 - Percentage of total positive outcome rate by CSP
(2022 – 2023 compared to preceding year)

Positive Outcome Rate



Dacorum

Dacorum has both the highest number of Stop and Searches by CSP (Figure 3) and the lowest positive outcomes data by CSP (Figure 4). Over the last 12 months there has been a 18.1% rise in the use of stop and search in Dacorum. Furthermore, in 5 of the last 12 months Dacorum had the highest number of stop and searches in the county.

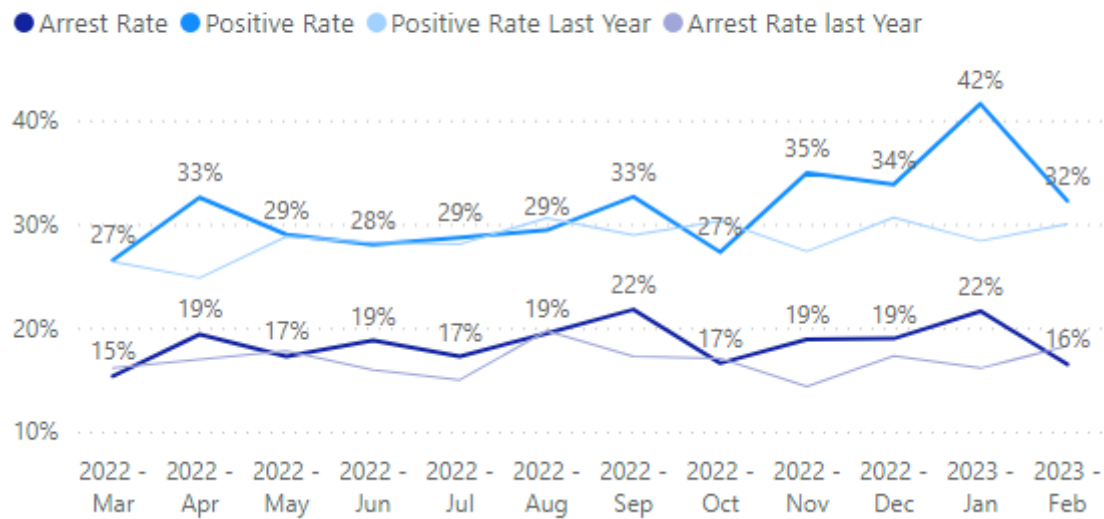
Of note was June 2022 when Dacorum accounted for 22% of the total number of stop and searches across the county. The local Chief Inspector has commented that from June into the autumn there was an intelligence-led, preventative youth knife crime operation which included an increased police presence and targeting of both offenders and their exploiters.

Number of arrests and positive disposals

Arrest rates following a stop search this year have fluctuated between 15% and 22%, with the highest levels seen in September 2022 and January 2023. Figure 4 shows that positive disposal rates are broadly in line with the arrest rates.

Figure 5 – Arrest Rate and Positive Disposal Rate (2022 – 2023 compared to preceding year)

Arrest Rate and Positive Disposal Rate



Panel Scrutiny of Stop and Search Records

339 dip samples of stop and search records for Hertfordshire were assessed this year out of a possible 6,949 (4.88 %) ²³. The position of confidence in the stop and search forms was 66.1%. This is in line with the Panel’s confidence level of 66% last year.

²³ Dip-sampling took place at 12 meetings across the year.

What is meant by 'confident' and 'not confident' in a record?

The Panel review the officer's records which outline their grounds for undertaking an individual stop and search. The Panel's approach is in line with APP guidance on PACE Code A and Best Use of Stop and Search to determine whether they are 'confident' or 'not confident' in the officer's grounds.

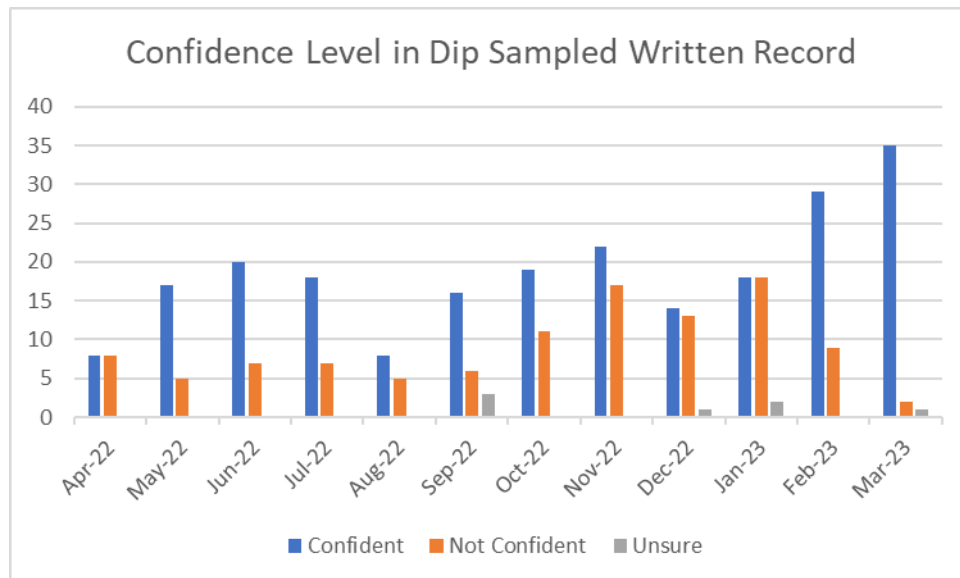
If Panel members are 'confident' in a record then they are satisfied that the stop and search was lawful, proportionate and ethical. The Panel can only draw their conclusions from the information contained in the record. If the detail is missing, they must conclude that they are not confident.

Most 'not confident' judgements are because records lack the necessary detail. This could be because:

- a. The officer didn't have any further information or grounds; OR
- b. The officer had further information and grounds but did not include in the record. For example, stating there was 'intelligence' but not how recent it was or how it was relevant to the stop and search. It may also be because the officer states the individual 'matched the description' but did not include the description or how the individual matched it.

In most cases the Panel will state they are not confident if they find identical records (a copy and paste record). The grounds of the stop and search should be relevant to the individual being searched and it is unlikely that the grounds for searching multiple individuals will be identical.

Figure 6 – Panel Confidence levels in Dip Sampled Written Record (by monthly meeting)



Over the year the two most common themes which occurred in the records that the Panel were not confident in were:

- Insufficient detail has been recorded for the Panel to make an assessment.
- Record mentions 'recent intelligence' without an indication of time and how recently that intelligence was received.

There were also some concerns raised about:

- Record being a copy and paste of another record. Due to the cut and paste nature of these records it is often unclear as to why a stop search was justified for the individual.
- Individual stop searched by association.

These four themes were also noted last year. In the autumn of 2022, the Constabulary held refresher training for all front-line officers. Over the last two months of the reporting year there has been an increase in the number of records the Panel has confidence in.

The records which the Panel review are taken from TuServ, the Constabulary's recording system which officers can access whilst out on patrol. The Panel review the written grounds, the time and location of the search and the powers which have been used. The Panel have noted that officers record information in several fields on the database which are not in scope for their scrutiny. Recently the Panel questioned whether officers are aware that only the main part of the record (which those who are stopped and searched are entitled to a copy of) is scrutinised. The Constabulary have highlighted this during training. However, they recognise that it is an ongoing issue and continue to work with frontline officers on this.

Case Study of a record the Panel were not confident in

It was reported to Police that a male was using a vehicle that contained a sledgehammer.

Panel feedback: Serious concerns. Total lack of narrative.

The Panel continue to recognise good practice and during the feedback sessions at their monthly meetings they do highlight excellent records to the Constabulary. Such records include clear, concise narratives or a good explanation of how the intelligence has informed the stop and search.

Case Study of a record the Panel were confident in

Officers responded to the report of a burglary in the early hours of the morning. The occupants of the property had disturbed the suspect(s) who had made off from the address in an unknown direction. No description of suspects provided.

Officers decided to walk through a nearby secluded canal path and park which would directly lead off from the road the burglary occurred. Officers believed that suspects may hide in this area.

Upon making to the area officers heard male voices arguing. Within a secluded area behind a bush, they located two males. The males could not give a reasonable answer as to why they were in the area at that time of night.

One of the males and the subject of this record is well known for theft related offending. Both males seemed nervous and fidgety.

Panel feedback: A well-written account

The Panel's monthly assessment of records is shared with the appropriate CSP Chief Inspector as appropriate to feedback to their officers. See Appendix D Feedback Loop for further information.

8. Disproportionality

In his 2022 Criminal Justice and Community Safety Plan²⁴, the Commissioner outlined his commitment to address disproportionality in Hertfordshire, an issue with which forces across the country struggle. In February 2023, the Commissioner appointed the University of Hertfordshire to undertake a six-month research project into the use of stop and search in the county²⁵. The research commissioned through Hertfordshire University will help us to understand more about disproportionality and the application of stop and search, but we also need to learn more about how the tactic is used to identify vulnerability and therefore accelerate safeguarding measures. For example, in 2021 a report²⁶ produced by the Constabulary into child exploitation found a high degree of cross-over between young knife carriers, violence and drug supply, but also how young perpetrators experienced exploitation and serious victimisation. The final report is due to be shared with the Commissioner in the autumn and the results will be published later this year. The Commissioner will then work with the Constabulary and Panel to respond to the findings.

The Panel have maintained their keen interest in examining data relating to the proportionality of stop and searches, including by ethnicity. The 2021 Census data showed that the percentage of ethnic minorities in Hertfordshire has risen in each non-white ethnic group, therefore meaning that the percentage of white people has fallen²⁷. This has had an impact on the disproportionality data. This data is provided by the Constabulary and monitored by the Panel to understand how likely a person from an ethnic group other than white is to be stopped and searched, compared to a white person.

Figure 7 shows the rate of disproportionality over from 2016/17 to 2022/23. From 2018/19 the disproportionality rate reduced from 6.8 to 4.1 in 2021/22. The rate of 4.1 stayed the same in 2022/23. Figure 10 shows the rate of disproportionality by gender for children and young people aged 10-24 years old. Further analysis is required to understand what is driving the disparity and how the Constabulary can tackle any related vulnerability and safeguarding issues.

²⁴ <https://www.hertscommissioner.org/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/police-and-crime-plan/current/117672-herts-cons-everybodys-business-final-accessible-version.pdf>

²⁵ [Research into Stop and Search disproportionality funded by PCC \(hertscommissioner.org\)](#)

²⁶ Clare Hill & Shirelle Salam, Child Exploitation Review, 2021.

²⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/areas/E10000015/>

Figure 7 – Disproportionality by Composite Ethnic Group

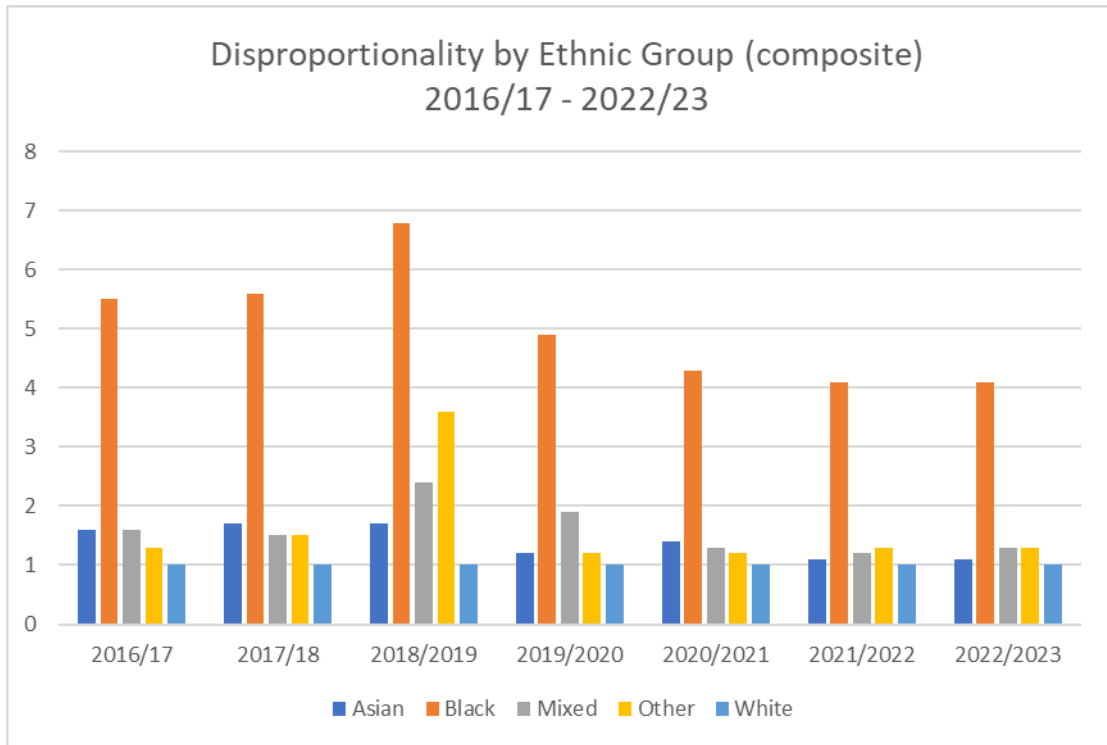


Figure 8 shows that a person was most likely to be stopped if they were age 15-19 (29% of all stops were in this age bracket), a 1% reduction compared to last year when 30% of all stops were in this age bracket. Figure 9 shows that males are most likely to be stopped, accounting for 85.8% of all stops. This is broadly in line with last year when 86.6% of all stops were on males.

Figure 8 - Stop and Search by age (2022 – 2023)

Stop Search on Person by Age Group

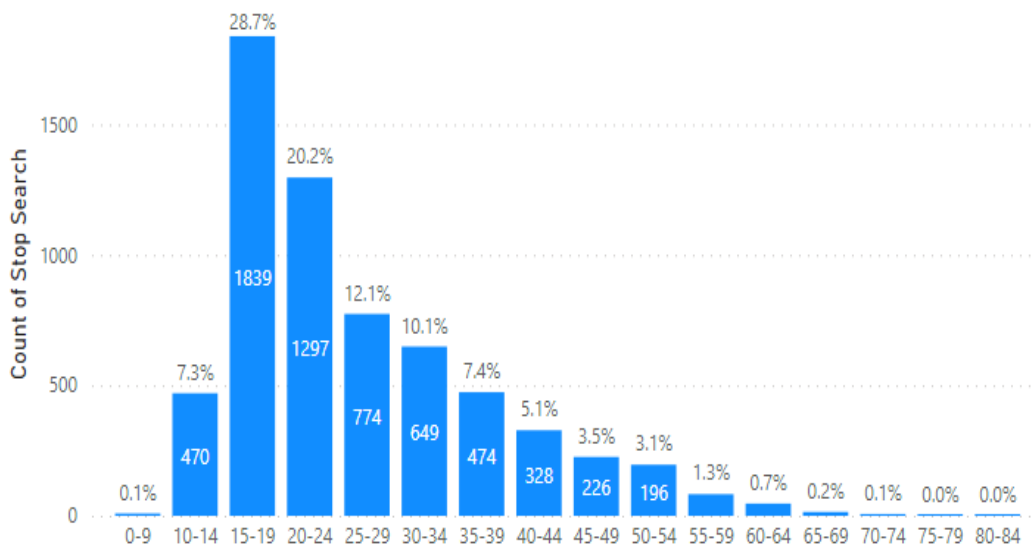


Figure 9 – Stop and Search by gender (2022 – 2023)

Stop Search on Person by Gender

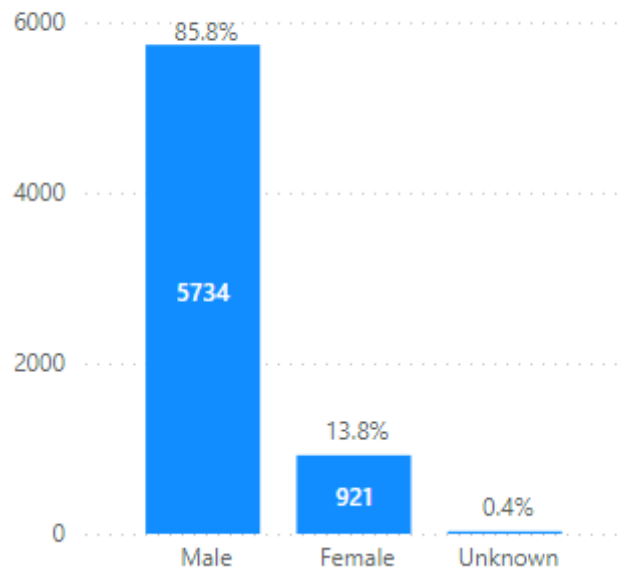
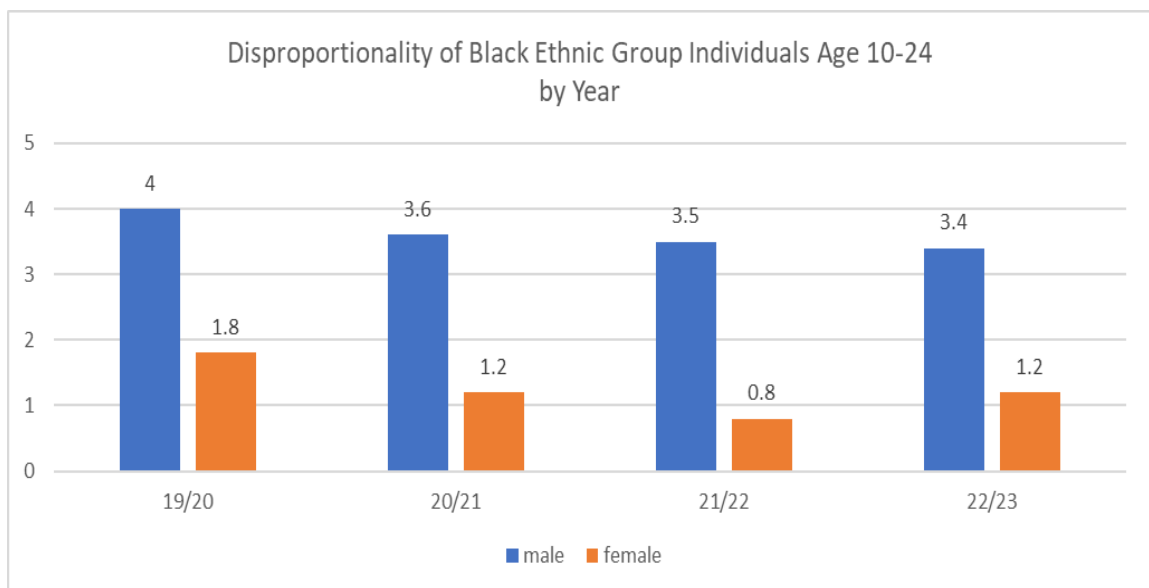


Figure 10 - Disproportionality of Black Ethnic Group Individuals aged 10 – 24 years



There are several caveats that need to be considered when reviewing disproportionality data. Those who are stopped and searched with no further action do not have to provide any personal information about themselves, this includes their age, ethnicity and address. To augment any data given, officers are asked to use their judgement to record ethnicity, this is referred to as 'officer defined ethnicity'. The disproportionality data is composite data; if data has not been provided by the person who was stopped and searched then officer defined ethnicity has been used. It also important to bear in mind that officer actions are also led by the intelligence they receive from the

public. Whilst imperfect, the data does enable the Panel to ask questions of the Constabulary about this important issue.

9. Body Worn Video (BWV)

The Panel have viewed an increased amount of BWV, 18 pieces of footage compared to 11 last year. Of the 18 viewed, the Panel were confident in 12 records and not confident in 6.

The Panel raised one concern about an officer's language (swearing). Where other concerns were noted, these included: hurried issuing of GOWISELY (the reasonable steps an officer must undertake ahead of undertaking a search)²⁸; insufficient grounds; and one incident where the Panel were not confident that the officer was in control of the stop. The Panel noted 8 occasions where there was exemplary or particularly patient / respectful officer behaviour.

The proportion of BWV footage reviewed this year was very small. The return to more in person meetings makes viewing the footage more challenging in terms of break out space at venues, which has been limited. The Panel, in line with the Health Check recommendations, have an appetite to review more footage. From May 2023, the OPCC put in place arrangements for one breakout group to review footage at each meeting. Moving forward, this should mean that around 40 pieces of footage can be reviewed each year.

In 2022, the OPCC started the pilot of a Body Worn Video Scrutiny Panel. This Panel considers use of BWV during both stop searches and use of force. They are not reviewing the police powers per se, rather the compliance with force policy to turn on the camera at the earliest opportunity in order to capture evidence. The Panel also comment on how individual officers conduct themselves. The Pilot is ongoing and will be reviewed in due course.

10. Section 60s

Whilst the Panel do not have a formal scrutiny role around Section 60, they have an agreement with the Constabulary to review all uses of the power.

Four Section 60s were reviewed by the Panel at their meetings over the last year. There were two in Stevenage (June and July meeting), one in Ware (December meeting) and one in Oxhey (March meeting). The relevant Chief Inspector or Inspector for each area attended to set out the decision-making process, to explain the outcome and take questions from the Panel.

²⁸ GOWISELY is a national mnemonic. Please see the Glossary for further details.

What is a Section 60 search?

Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is different to normal stop and search as it gives police the temporary powers to search people without reasonable grounds. This can only happen in a defined area at a specific time when a senior officer believes there is a possibility of serious violence, or weapons are involved.

11. Complaints

All expressions of dissatisfaction are initially logged by the Hertfordshire OPCC's Complaint Resolution Team (CRT). Those complaints which meet a certain risk criterion (including any relating to a stop and search) and any logged matters which cannot be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction are referred to the Constabulary's Professional Standards Department (PSD).

Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023:

- 32 complaints relating to stop and search were made by the public.
- Over the same 12-month period there were 6,949 stop and searches. This means there was a complaint raised for 0.46% of all stop and searches.
- This is a 56.2% rise compared to last year when for the corresponding period 2021/2022 there were 14 complaints. Over that period there were 7,364 stop and searches. This means there was a complaint raised for 0.19% of all stop and searches.
- Of the 32 complaints received, it was noted that the other aspects of the alleged complaints tended to consist of: use of force; individual officer behaviour of either being intolerant, impolite, unprofessional, or overbearing; or around delivery of duties and services relating to information or decisions.
- None of the 32 complaints amounted to a misconduct issue or resulted in an investigation into office behaviour.

There was no use of the Community Complaints Trigger²⁹ for 2020/21.

To date there have been no complaints about the Stop and Search Panel.

In April 2023, following their six-monthly retrospective review of complaints data, the Panel agreed to move to a quarterly review. They will therefore review the next tranche of data in July 2023.

12. Special Operation

The Detective Inspector who leads on a special operation for Hertfordshire asked the Panel to review the associated stop search records generated in January 2023. This is a proactive operation targeting the use of the road network by criminals who offend across borders. Multiple forces across the Southeast of England and the Midlands are involved and stop and search is one of the tactics they use.

²⁹ See Appendix C for further information about the Community Complaints Trigger.

The Detective Inspector had identified that officers on the operation were less likely to comply with data quality. He therefore wanted additional scrutiny of the records to better understand the issue.

An extraordinary meeting was held in March where 11 Panel members scrutinised 15 records and 4 BWV clips. The Panel were confident in 14 of the records.

The Detective Inspector commented that the Panel's findings were pleasing to see as it was clear that on the whole officers were using their powers in line with established guidelines. The written record which the Panel were not confident in was subsequently reviewed by the officer concerned and their line manager. When the BWV was subsequently reviewed, management were satisfied that the grounds for the search were there. The officer received feedback on writing grounds for the written stop and search record.

The Detective Inspector also noted that the Panel's feedback was used to shape the next phase of the operation. Officers were briefed about the expectations for written grounds and supervisors then quality assured the records.

13. Conclusion

The Executive Summary outlines the key findings by the Panel for the period April 2022 – March 2023. It also highlights the Panel's recommendations for the year ahead.

The report evidences the Panel's view that there are no serious concerns about the use of stop and search in Hertfordshire. Rather, the trajectory over recent years is one of improvement including the use of the power and the associated outcomes.

Appendix A: Comparison of Stop and Searches figures from Hertfordshire and Most Similar Force Group (1 March 2022 – 28 February 2023)

County	Monthly Average Stops	Average NFA%	Average Arrest %	Average %+ve Outcomes
Hertfordshire	574.7	75.87%	13.24%	24.07%
Hampshire	590.4	72.40%	9.36%	27.23%
Essex	1094.9	74.86%	11.38%	24.86%
Avon & Somerset*	374.5	66.67%	15.62%	25.95%
TVP	883	77.19%	9.39%	22.71%
Sussex	289.8	64.54%	21.57%	34.95%
Staffordshire**	258.7	68.93%	17.66%	30.35%
Leicestershire	317.2	69.14%	16.33%	28.79%

* Only data up to June 2022 is available on www.police.uk

** Only data up to January 2023 is available on www.police.uk

Appendix B: Progress Review

	2021/22 recommendations	Progress Update
1.	To identify CSPs where additional scrutiny may be helpful in order to support improvements or identify legitimate explanations for lower positive disposal rates, for example, Watford and North Herts	The Panel continue to monitor data trends, including by CSP and raise concerns with the Constabulary as appropriate.
2.	To identify new ways to engage with the community; particularly with those who are most impacted by Stop and Search.	The Panel are passionate about this action. Work is ongoing and is due to be implemented as part of the Health Check work.
3.	To fully induct new members onto the Panel and continue to ensure that there is consistency across the Panel when scrutinising records and ensure moderation is in place.	One new member joined this year and was fully inducted. The Panel continue to discuss their approach to scrutiny during their work and at meetings. The OPCC monitor the quality of returns and offer feedback as appropriate.
4.	To continue to ensure that feedback to the Constabulary is clear. Following the recommendation in Inspector Palfreyman's thesis, the Panel will explore introducing a red, amber, green rating system. (This was a thesis on disproportionality in Stop and Search.)	Work ongoing. In November, to help the Panel frame their feedback, the Constabulary and OPCC produced a new handout for use during meetings. A draft RAG rating system is being finalised as part of the Health Check work for both written records and BWV. It is planned to be in use for the June meeting of the Panel.
5.	To further explore disproportionality and support the Commissioner to commission research to understand whether there is any evidence of Stop and Search in Hertfordshire being discriminatory.	Completed. The University of Hertfordshire are due to present their findings to the Commissioner in the autumn. The Commissioner will work with the Constabulary and Panel to respond to the findings.

Appendix C: Panel Meetings

During their meetings, the Panel may do any of the following:

The dip-sampling of stop and search records

Members will split into small groups of between two and four individuals to review a random selection of the stop and searches which have taken place in the preceding month in Hertfordshire. Each group is allocated a portion of the spreadsheet (for example up to 20 rows) from which they randomly select records to review.

They record their conclusions for each record on a feedback form, stating whether they were confident or not confident in the officer's grounds. Following each meeting, the feedback forms are processed and provided to the Constabulary's lead officer for follow-up with supervisors and officers.

Reviewing monthly summary stop and search data

Each month the Constabulary provide the Panel with data which outlines stop and search activity from the preceding month. The data pack includes:

- The number of stop and searches where the object of the search was found, as well as other property found.
- The gender of those stopped and searched for all stops.
- The total number of stop and searches (including a breakdown of ethnicity, both officer defined and subject defined), arrests and positive outcomes by CSP per month.
- The total number of stop and searches in relation to drugs and acquisitive crime per month and how many resulted in an arrest or a positive outcome.

Body Worn Video footage

The Panel also review some selected BWV footage. The Panel are provided with the correlating stop and search record, before reviewing the footage. Each clip is assessed against a series of prompts, including whether the record reflects what they saw in the footage and whether the officer complied with procedures appropriately. Following a group discussion, Panel members decide as to whether they felt confident or not confident in the appropriateness of the search and of the conduct of the officer(s) concerned.

Following the meeting, the feedback forms are processed and provided to the Constabulary's lead officer for follow-up with supervisors and officers.

Section 60 authorisations

In 2018, the Panel began reviewing Section 60 authorisations. Officers searching under Section 60 are not required to provide reasonable grounds for individual searches and therefore, there is no requirement for the Panel to scrutinise individual grounds. To ensure the Panel can fulfil their scrutiny function effectively, in line with the guidance under Code of Practice Code A and the Best Use of Stop and Search, the Panel are presented with the following:

- Overview of the application made to a senior officer and the rank of the authorising officer.
- Details of how the authorisation was managed.
- Outline of how, and through what means, the use of the power was communicated to the public/local community before (where practicable) and after its authorisation.
- Summary of activity during the period concerned. For example, the number of stop and searches, details of items found and positive outcomes.

Complaints

In accordance with the Best Use of Stop and Search guidance, the Panel are sighted on any complaints made by the public about a stop and search event which has undergone investigation and resolution by the Professional Standards Department (PSD) and/or the Complaints Resolution Team (CRT).

Twice a year, the Chief Inspector of PSD attends a Panel meeting to provide an oral update on the quantity and type of complaints made into their department. Additionally, the CRT provide a written update on the number of complaints made into the OPCC and through the Force Communications Room (FCR).

It was agreed by the Panel that a Community Complaints Trigger³⁰ will be issued if the number of complaints for a particular district is higher than one per month, with the scrutiny Panel being given the option to do a further deep dive of these complaints. There have been no Community Complaints Triggers for the last year.

Strip searches of a child

PACE Code C³¹ sets out the legal requirements for the strip search of a child. All children must be treated as vulnerable due to their age and safeguarding prioritised. A strip search should only be carried out in extenuating circumstances. The search must take place at a police station (not custody) unless there are extenuating circumstances with an appropriate adult present. A search may only take place in the absence of the appropriate adult if the subject signifies in the presence of the appropriate adult that they do not want them to be present and the adult agrees. A record must be made of the decision and signed by the appropriate adult.

In Hertfordshire, local policy states that no child can be strip searched without an Inspector's authorisation. This is in line with the Children's Commissioner's recent recommendation³².

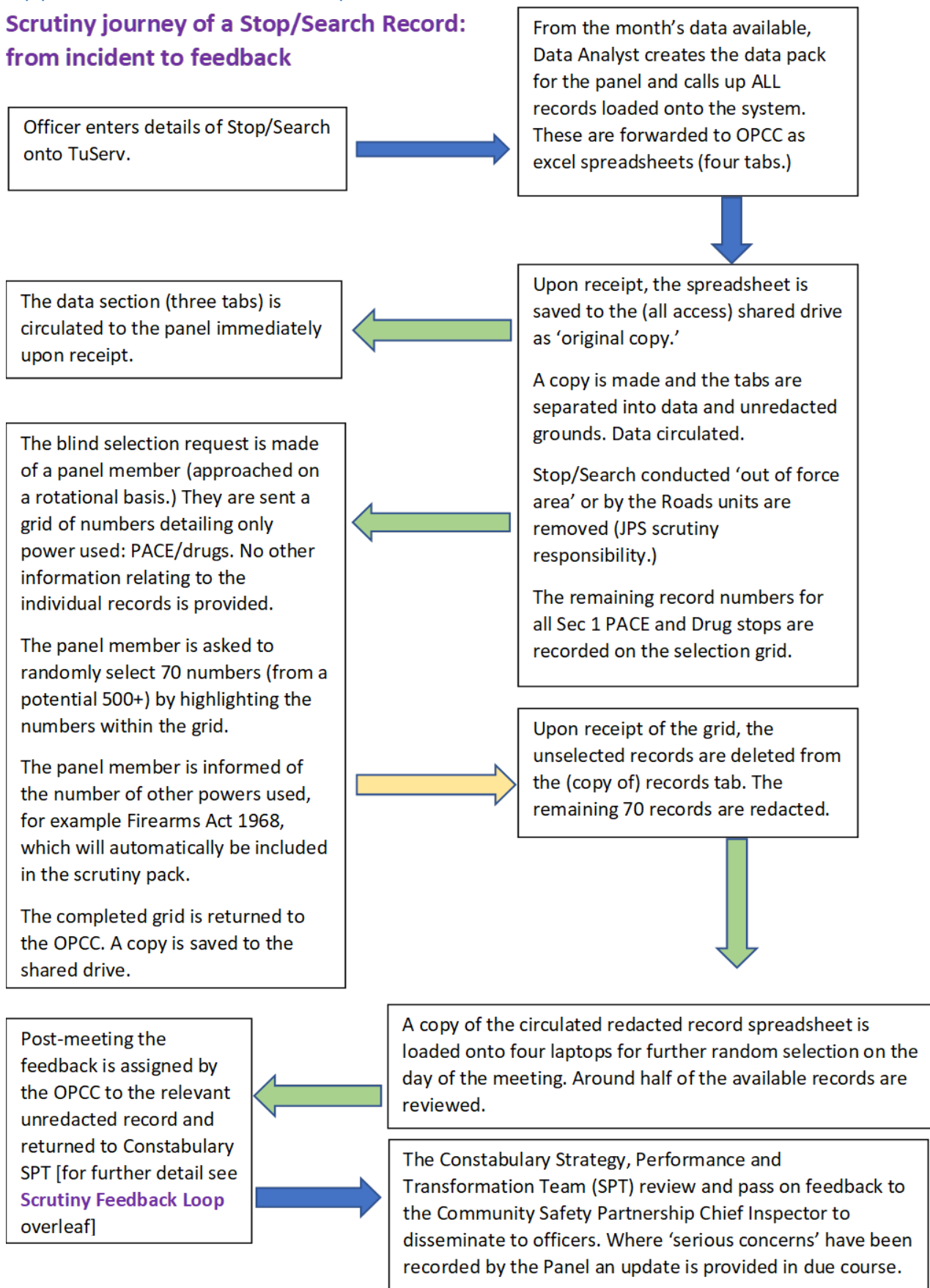
³⁰ The Community Complaints Trigger is a complaint policy that requires the police to explain to the community how the powers are being used if there is a large volume of complaints. This is in addition to the force complaints process. This allows for an independent review and ensures there is a response to any public concerns about stop and search activity in their community. More information about the Trigger can be found here - www.herts.police.uk/Information-and-services/About-us/Transparency/Stop-and-search/Community-complaints-trigger

³¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/police-and-criminal-evidence-act-1984-pace-codes-of-practice>

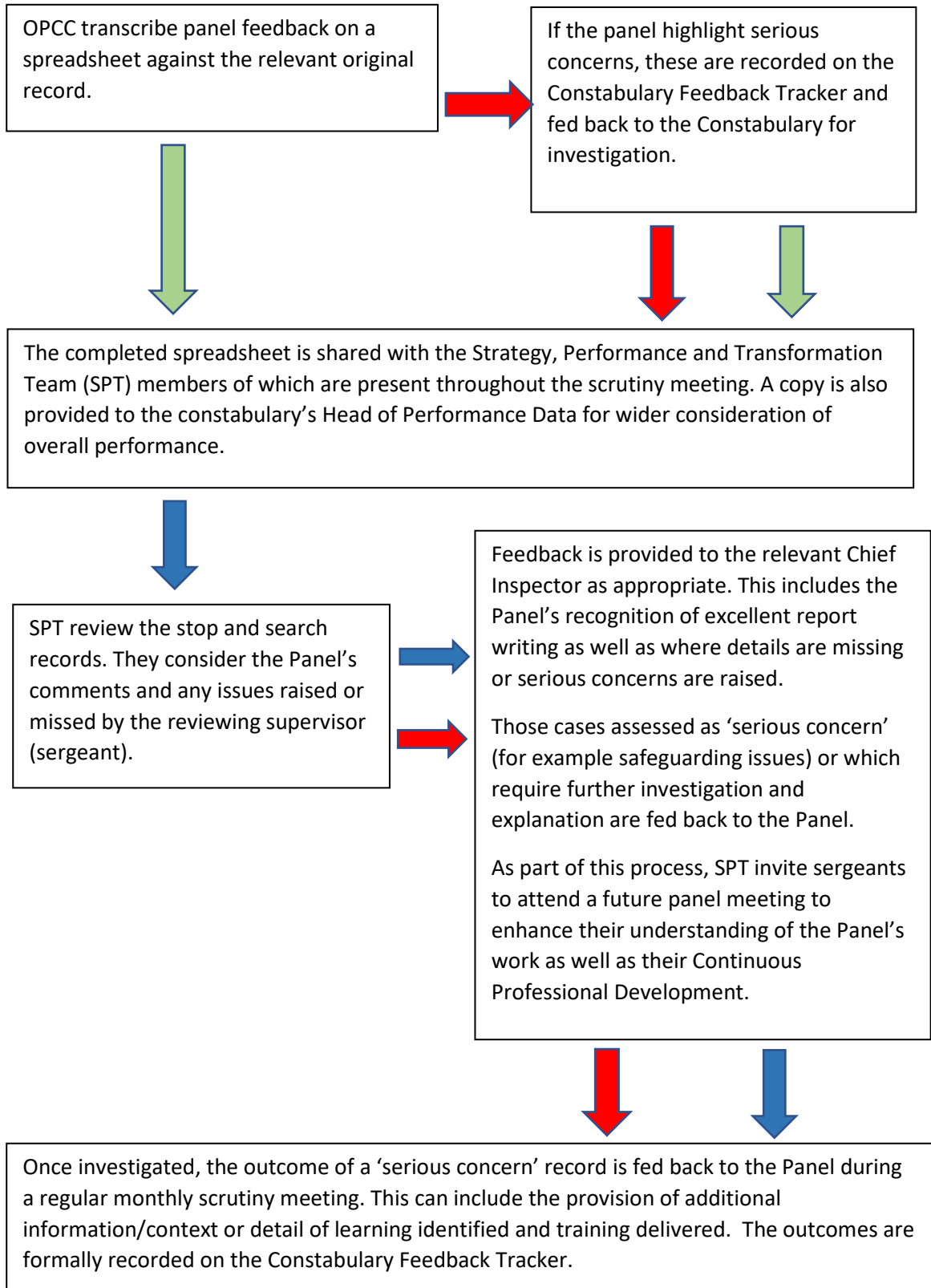
³² <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/strip-search-of-children-in-england-and-wales/>

Appendix D: Feedback Loop

Scrutiny journey of a Stop/Search Record: from incident to feedback



Scrutiny Feedback Loop



Glossary of Terms

Terms	Acronym (if applicable)	Description
Best Use of Stop and Search	BUSS	The Best Use of Stop and Search scheme was announced by the Home Secretary in 2014. The scheme introduced a number of measures designed to create greater transparency, accountability and community involvement in the use of stop and search powers.
Body Worn Video	BWV	The cameras which officers wear to capture both video and audio evidence.
Complaint Resolution Team	CRT	Complaints about Hertfordshire Constabulary are initially by the Complaint Resolution Team (CRT). If a complaint can be handled outside of Schedule 3 of legislation the CRT will attempt to service recover the complaint. If a complaint needs to be formally recorded within Schedule 3 of legislation due to its nature, then it will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Department in Hertfordshire Constabulary who will handle all these matters.
Community Safety Partnership	CSP	Community Safety Partnerships are made up of representatives from the police, Local Authorities, fire and rescue authorities, health and probation services (the 'responsible authorities'). The responsible authorities work together to protect their local communities from crime and to help people feel safer.
Force Communications Room	FCR	The Force Communications Room is responsible for taking emergency and non-emergency calls, recording crime and deploying resources to incidents
GOWISELY	GOWISELY	The national mnemonic ³³ is a prompt for officers to remind them of the reasonable steps they must take before conducting a search: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds for the search (reason for suspicion) • Object of the search (i.e., what is being looked for) • Warrant number, (if not in uniform) • Identification (officer's name except in terrorism cases when the force number only will be given. Police officers not in uniform will show their warrant cards) • Station to which the officer is attached. • Entitlement to copy of search within 3 months or 12 months in the case of Section 60 • Legal Power being exercised. • 'You are detained for the purpose of a search' (person searched must be informed of this)

³³ <https://www.college.police.uk/app/stop-and-search/professional>

Microsoft PowerBI		Power BI is an interactive data visualization software product developed by Microsoft with primary focus on business intelligence.
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner	OPCC	The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner helps the Commissioner to discharge their statutory duties and deliver their Police and Crime Plan. Office staff are politically restricted. This includes being a member of a political party.
Police & Crime Commissioner	PCC / the Commissioner	The role of the Commissioner is to be the voice of the people and hold the police to account. They are responsible for the totality of policing. Commissioners aim to cut crime and deliver an effective and efficient police service within their force area.
Police & Criminal Evidence Act Code A	PACE Code A	PACE Code A covers police powers to stop and search persons and vehicles and the requirements for officers to make a record of a stop or encounter.
Positive Outcome		Positive outcomes, include arrests, as well as out of court disposals. An out of court disposal may be a community resolutions or conditional cautions, which negate the need for individuals to be formally processed through custody suites. These cautions or resolutions may involve fines, behaviour change programmes or victim reparation.
Professional Standards Department	PSD	The Professional Standards Department consists of Complaints, Misconduct, Anti-Corruption and Vetting, all committed to maintaining and improving public confidence and quality of service, protecting and enhancing the integrity of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire forces
Red, Amber, Green rating	RAG	Also known as 'traffic lighting,' this rating system is used to summarise indicator values, where green denotes a 'favourable' value, red an 'unfavourable' value and amber a 'neutral' value.
Section 60	S60	Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is different to normal stop and search as it gives police the temporary powers to search people without reasonable grounds. This can only happen in a defined area at a specific time when a senior officer believes there is a possibility of serious violence, or weapons are involved. This means anyone in that area, for example, near a football ground, may be searched for weapons without the police officer having reasonable grounds for each person searched.

Stop and Search	S&S	A police officer has powers to stop and search you if they have 'reasonable grounds' to suspect you are carrying: <ul data-bbox="778 277 1497 465" style="list-style-type: none">• illegal drugs• a weapon• stolen property• something which could be used to commit a crime, such as a crowbar
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