



Response Date:12/08/2026

2026/763 - Rural crime officers

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

1. The total number of police officers currently employed by your force.

1742

2. Whether your force has a dedicated rural crime team or dedicated officers responsible solely for rural crime.

There is a dedicated Rural Crime Team that deals with agricultural crime, wildlife crime, and heritage crime. The team has been in place for the past 11 years.

3. The number of dedicated rural crime officers currently employed by your force.

There are 11 dedicated Rural Crime officers.

OFFICER	8
PCSO	3
Grand Total	11

4. The number of officers and staff who have received specialist rural crime training in each of the following years:

- a. 2023/24
- b. 2024/25
- c. 2025/26

All officers are trained and have attended the full Wildlife Crime Investigator course set by the National Wildlife training Unit. The team have also taken part in farming and other agricultural related training during this period.

- a. 2023/24 – 5 (WDBC & Rural surv)
- b. 2024/25 -5 (mental health awareness agriculture community / NWCU foundation for wildlife crime officer / off road driving)
- c. 2025/26 – 8 (towing)

5. Details of specialist equipment and resources allocated specifically for rural crime operations, including (but not limited to):

- a. drone surveillance equipment
- b. 4x4 vehicles
- c. high-powered torches
- d. other specialist equipment used for rural crime activity

The team currently utilise SUV's that are all wheel drive. This fleet in the next few months will be replaced by full 4x4 capability. The team also use binoculars, high powered torches and have

access to an Automatic Number Plate recognition camera. The team do not have a dedicated Drone however the force does have a drone unit that can be utilised when required.

- 6. The annual funding allocated specifically to rural crime teams or rural crime operations for the following financial years:**
- a. 2023/24**
 - b. 2024/25**
 - c. 2025/26**
 - d. 2026/27**

I have interpreted "annual funding allocated" to mean budget allocated. On that basis, I can provide budget allocated for the staff in the Rural Crime department over the financial years requested. However, we do not delegate non staff budget down to department level nor do we allocate specific annual funding/budget to rural crime operations.

Rural Crime department – budget for staff costs 2023/24 FY – 2026/27 FY

	Budget for staff costs (basic pay, pension, N.I & allowances)
2023/24 financial year	£542,551.00
2024/25 financial year	£635,154.36
2025/26 financial year	£687,409.63
2026/27 financial year	£728,159.78

- 7. The median response time for emergency and priority incidents, broken down by rural and urban classification where available**

2024/2025 – Emergency response median 00:10:12, Priority response median – 00:37:18.
2025/2026 - Emergency response median 00:10:06, Priority response median – 00:38:56.
2026/2027 so far Emergency response median 00:10:02, Priority response median – 00:39:43.

It is not possible to breakdown by rural and urban classification.

- 8. A copy of the force's current rural crime strategy, action plan, or equivalent document. If no such document exists, please state this.**

Please see the attached documents which are the Rural Crime strategy and heritage strategy.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 04/08/2026



**TROSEDDAU BYWYD GWYLLT
A CHEFN GWLAD CYMRU**
WALES WILDLIFE & RURAL CRIME



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Wales' Wildlife and Rural Crime Strategy 2025-2028





RURAL CRIME
PREVENTION VISIT AND
PROPERTY MARKING

Trust and relationships between the police and the farming community have improved in many counties... The presence of officers at livestock markets has been positively received, increasing their accessibility and building confidence within the farming community. Continued engagement with the rural community is essential for maintaining and strengthening this trust¹

Foreword

The first joint Police and Welsh Government Wildlife and Rural Crime Strategy (2023 – 2025) was embraced positively by stakeholders and practitioners alike and as such we are delighted to build upon that work with the publication of this new three-year successor Strategy.

Both wildlife and rural crime are issues of national and international significance. It is not only the intrinsic importance of the species, habitats and people affected by these crimes, but it is also the gravity of the links with other harmful behaviours, including serious organised crime.

We are confident that collaboration is the right approach for Wales – between the Welsh Government and the police and, critically, with our other partners in the statutory and NGO sectors, without who much of this work simply could not be delivered. The involvement of dozens of organisations across all the priority areas therefore remains critical to achieving success.

As could be expected, there have been key learnings from the first two-year Strategy which, along with the results of the stakeholder consultation, have shaped the development of this new strategic approach. It is evident the innovative role of the Wales Wildlife and Rural Crime Coordinator, which is now approaching a fifth year, continues to be pivotal and as such the Welsh Government has committed a further three years of funding, to correspond with the period to which this Strategy applies.

The commitment to dovetail with wildlife and rural crime strategies at a UK level is preserved so that we may stay alert to national or international trends, and to ensure key outcomes are shared in both directions. We also remain, however, ambitious for what can be achieved by those working together and responding to the issues specific to, and appropriate for, Wales so that our wildlife, environment and rural communities can be better protected.



Nigel Harrison
Deputy Chief Constable
North Wales Police
NPCC Lead for Wildlife
& Rural Crime



Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Deputy First Minister and
Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change Rural Affairs
Welsh Government

Introduction

The results of the stakeholder survey conducted during the development of this Strategy demonstrate that during the past two years public confidence in policing has improved in many areas. Challenges remain, however, including variations in response, by area and by issue. This only serves to reinforce the need for the Coordinator role with a focus on providing information, training, resources and coordination across the four police areas to support improvements where possible.

NFU Mutual reports the cost of rural crime claims rose in Wales from £2.4m in 2023 to £2.8m in 2024 but overall remains low compared to areas of England. These increases may be attributed to organised criminal gangs targeting farmyards and fields, driven by high inflation and ready resale markets both domestically and overseas for high value items such as ATVs and GPS devices. The report emphasises the severe impacts of rural crime with 96% of NFU Mutual agents surveyed noting the negative effects upon the mental well-being of farmers. The persistent threat of crime, combined with economic pressures, has only heightened stress levels within rural communities.

The priority has been on – and will continue to be – reducing all forms of wildlife and rural crime, enhancing rural partnerships, and improving community safety and this has been through a structure of six priority groups bringing together police and partner organisations. Our approach in Wales recognises the mental health vulnerabilities within our rural communities and as such has a specific, and unique, strategic focus on connecting enforcers and support services. The aim is to ensure those responders dealing with an unfolding crisis are better equipped to access the right help whether that be mental health, suicide prevention or domestic abuse. Whilst this has been broadly welcomed by stakeholders in the consultation, there remains some concern about its inclusion in the Strategy. In recognition of this, the group has been renamed Networking Rural Support Services to better reflect its strategic aims.

Other changes from lessons learned and consultation responses include the removal of the Wales Police Rural Supervisors group from the strategic priorities. Whilst this valuable group will be retained, as a forum for operational and management issues it will instead become part of the governance structure. Meanwhile heritage crime will become a full priority group, which reflects both the emerging trends and the number of partners who are engaging and contributing which it is hoped will result in more initiatives to help tackle these crimes.

Some stakeholders remain steadfastly supportive of the broader priority areas that are unique to the Wales Strategy whereas some have repeated calls for narrower and/or more specific priorities. Such an approach, however, could disenfranchise many of the important stakeholders who currently can increase or decrease their engagement to suit the nature of the work the group is undertaking. The reality of current resources is that it is simply not possible to have a priority group for every species and/or specific criminal activity. By grouping issues together there is the opportunity to share resources, knowledge and activities. There is also a flexibility which enables each group to remain agile and respond appropriately to emerging crime patterns and trends.



I feel extremely strongly about this broad focus of groups continuing – it prevents siloed working and ensures efficient collaboration and cross species, habitat and sector learning²



The meetings have strengthened
[our] relationships with police,
other third-sector organisations,
and farming communities.
It has facilitated knowledge-sharing,
collaborative problem-solving,
and an improved understanding
of rural crime³



Our mission is to provide the best possible service to those residing and working within rural Wales, ensuring the preservation of our world-renowned farming produce, rich historical culture, and wildlife habitats for now and generations to come.

Wildlife and rural crime can take many forms, including the theft of agricultural equipment, livestock offences, and the destruction of wildlife habitats. The police and our key partner agencies play a vital role in preventing these crimes from occurring and apprehending those responsible.

A coordinated and strategic approach is essential for success and sustainability. The police and our partner agencies are at the forefront of this progress, facilitating a combined approach to problem-solving by utilising expert knowledge and experience throughout Wales and beyond.

This Strategy, aligned with the UK NPCC rural Strategy, provides clear guidance and support for those tackling rural offences. It aims to reduce crime at its source through a coordinated and professional approach.

During the last strategic period technological advancements, improved training for rural officers, and increased rural community liaison have significantly enhanced the capacity to detect and address incidents across Wales. The 'We Don't Buy Crime' project and crime prevention initiatives in Wales represent a collaborative and proactive approach to crime reduction, leveraging technology, community engagement, and strategic partnerships to create safer communities and reduce the incidence of acquisitive crimes across the country.

Livestock attacks continue to be a significant issue for our farming communities in Wales, but several initiatives are enabling a fight back. A new law is passing through the UK Parliament and a project to analyse and compare DNA between an attacked animal and the suspected dog(s) is also underway. A Responsible Dog Ownership Course, in collaboration with the Blue Cross, is being trialled in Wales as a UK first, giving owners the opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge to prevent further occurrences.

We have to be creative and focused to firstly understand the issues and then seek the answers to ensure that our rural communities have the best possible support and protection.

As the Wales Rural & Wildlife Crime Coordinator, I am proud to lead a programme that contributes to the success and future growth of our rural communities. Our goal is to minimise the risk and fear of crime while maintaining our iconic wildlife, heritage, and habitats.

Rob Taylor, QPM, Wales Wildlife & Rural Crime Coordinator



Strategy Development

Throughout the execution of the work under the previous Strategy there has been an emphasis on continual development aimed at maximising impact and chances of success, while also anticipating future strategies. Feedback from programme partners has been, and will continue, to be encouraged, with constructive challenge welcomed particularly where resource pressures and purview – for those involved in delivery – is recognised.

The Wildlife and Rural Crime Coordination Programme: Theory of Change report⁴, commissioned by Welsh Government and published in October 2023, underpinned the questions within the consultation sent to all programme stakeholders in March 2025. The report, along with the results of the stakeholder consultation, and recent research into wildlife and rural crime in Wales, forms the foundation for this new Strategy.

⁴ <https://shorturl.at/lrfFx>

Wildlife and Rural Crime Consultation Outcomes

A targeted stakeholder consultation was issued in March 2025 to all partners who have engaged (at any level) in the programme. Responses came direct from wildlife and rural crime police officers, Police & Crime Commissioners, statutory bodies, and a wide range of NGOs representing the victims of crime and those working within the environment and/ or with animals.

Benefits of the previous Strategy were reported by 73% (of those responding to a question on benefits and challenges), along with a healthy engagement from all respondents providing ideas on developing the programme further to be even more targeted and effective. A number of respondents expressed a preference for the focus of the programme to be on a narrower set of issues, but others recognised the significant value that the broad focus of the priority groups has had in ensuring efficient collaboration and coordination. In this Strategy the priority groups have been kept broad to enable the merits of working collectively, and to enable organisations to target limited resources more effectively.

There was a mixed response on confidence in policing, with several respondents reporting on a personal or organisational opinion rather a wider society viewpoint. There are merits in understanding both, particularly where organisations have a larger membership from which to draw an opinion. Even where responses were not as positive, there was a general recognition of the competing priorities and resource demands upon the police service.

The question on the proposed priorities attracted the most responses and, whilst it is not yet universal, there appears to be an appreciation amongst most stakeholders that priority groups with broader areas of focus are, on balance, the best fit for Wales. Several changes to the perceived emphasis of issues within the priority areas, as well as calls for ceasing, merging, or introducing specific priorities were suggested but these proposals were varied and often conflicted. We have chosen to retain the broad set of priority groups, with relatively minor changes described above.



Having the Wales Rural & Wildlife Police Crime Coordinator in post has been a valuable factor in helping to strengthen that connection [with wildlife and rural crime police officers] in a positive and constructive way⁵

81% (of those who responded to the question on contact) reported a level of interaction with police wildlife and rural crime officers and the vast majority characterised this as positive, although the variances between police areas was also noted. The appetite for partnership working remains strong and there were offers of training support from partners which priority groups will be able to benefit from over the period of the strategy. Likewise other offers – from all respondents with the means – included expertise and knowledge, with the consultation serving as a timely reminder to priority groups to make use of any untapped resources. The detail provided by respondents, including a few suggestions on additional stakeholders to engage with, can be utilised by the priority groups.

Of those responding to a question about communications channels, almost all were able to offer at least a discussion on utilising their social media, newsletters and magazines to enable the dissemination of important information. This has the potential to enable access to many thousands of people and where those databases can select specifically rural residents this could be of benefit to any public awareness element in the work of the priority groups.

Strategic Aim

To consolidate and further develop an all-Wales coordinated and effective response to wildlife and rural crime; a response which complements the UK Strategy but is tailored to Wales' needs; supporting policing and its partners to prevent crime, pursue those who commit it, and protect those most affected by it. The communities, individuals, habitats and wildlife most at risk of harm will be the central focus.

Strategic Enablers

Enhanced Coordination

Enhanced coordination and effectiveness in addressing wildlife and rural crime, our strategic objectives include centralised intelligence, proportional data sharing agreements, and fostering cross border cooperation.



Secure Successful Prosecutions and hold offenders accountable

We will work to strengthen prosecution cases, by supporting better evidence gathering and analysis, improving officer skills and knowledge, working closer with specialist Crown Prosecution Service contacts, and advocating for increased penalties for rural crimes.



Disrupt and dismantle criminal networks involved in wildlife and rural crime

Utilise intelligence and advanced policing tactics to identify and target high-value criminal networks, conduct joint initiatives across Wales to disrupt their operations, and execute targeted enforcement operations.



Promote a culture of respect and stewardship for the natural environment

We will raise public awareness about the impacts of wildlife and rural crime, engage communities in protection through education and crime prevention, collaborate with government and public health agencies and promote the responsible use of nature spaces to support local communities and reduce crime.



Reducing Risk and Vulnerability

We will reduce vulnerability by safeguarding the most vulnerable, raise the profile of wildlife & rural crime using available crime statistics, and invest in relationships with professional civil society organisations to meet our strategic aims.



Governance, Ethics and Professionalism

We will maintain governance, provide value, remain data-focussed, professional, and robust.



Enhance Prevention and Detection Capabilities

We will focus on crime prevention, public information, utilise disruption tactics, and provide specialist training to prevent and address wildlife and rural crime.



Building Collective Resilience

We will focus on technology, performance, demand reduction, and community engagement to combat wildlife and rural crime effectively.





Delivering the Strategy

The Priority Groups were established under the previous Strategy and these will continue although by incorporating the changes previously mentioned to the Police Rural Supervisors Group, renaming Mental Health/Domestic Abuse to Networking Rural Support Services and introducing the Heritage Crime Group.

This Strategy is designed to provide the framework and high-level objectives within which the priority groups are expected to operate but each group has the autonomy to further define the parameters of its focus through its Terms of Reference. Each group will also be expected to produce their own measurable and achievable metrics, utilising the 4Ps and MoRILE⁶, with performance being reported against, quarterly, through the governance structure detailed later in this document.

The 4Ps are:

Prepare

Prepare for when wildlife and rural crime may occur, preventing where possible and mitigating its impact through efficient use of intelligence, data and technology.

Prevent

Preventing and deterring people from engaging in wildlife and rural crime through effective partnerships, media and communication, and public engagement.

Pursue

Relentlessly pursue offenders with particular focus on serious and organised criminals, using our criminal justice partners to prosecute, and to disrupt and deter offending through effective enforcement tactics.

Protect

Protect rural communities and wildlife from the impact of crime through a coordinated national effort utilising all resources and increasing the capacity and capability of police and partners.



Priorities 2025-2028

Bird Crime

Farm Crime

**Mammals and European
Protected Species**

Habitats

Heritage Crime

**Networking Rural
Support Services**

Priority Groups Overview

Bird Crime

Bird offences include poisoning, nest destruction, trapping, habitat damage, egg theft, trade, and illegal shooting. These crimes affect both raptors and urban species, as well as coastal birds.

The group identifies key threats to birds in Wales, collaborating through police operations, officer training, intelligence sharing, and public awareness. The Coordinator is also a member of the UK Bird of Prey Persecution Group.

Operation Seabird Cymru, a sub-group, addresses coastal offences, including mammal disturbances.

Overarching objectives:

- Reduce bird offences in Wales.
- Raise awareness of bird offences.
- Enhance police and partner agency training.

Farm Crime

Rural crimes in Wales primarily affect farms and rural communities. These include thefts of machinery, tools, vehicles, livestock, fuel and working dogs; attacks on livestock by dogs; arson; burglary; and equine offences.

The group coordinates action and awareness among police and farming unions. Farm crimes impact livelihoods and production, making prevention and police empowerment crucial. Raising awareness, preventing offences, and enhancing police powers are key objectives. Officer training is essential for understanding farm-related issues. Over 60 officers in Wales have completed specialised training.

Overarching objectives:

- Reduce farm-related crimes.
- Provide specialist training to officers and partners.
- Engage directly with farming communities and associated agencies.
- Seek law change, where appropriate.

Habitats

The habitats of Wales support ecosystems and wildlife, making the prevention of offences in rural areas important for their maintenance. Offences include fly-tipping, illegal off-roading, introducing invasive plants and species, and damage to protected SSSI areas (Sites of Special Scientific Interest). The group aims to identify issues across Wales by collaborating with partner agencies and experts to address offences effectively. Education, prevention, and enforcement are essential components of any action plan.

Operation Taurus Cymru – a sub-group, is a collaborative effort to combat illegal off-roading throughout Wales is crucial to prevent the spread and dispersal of offences from one area to another. Raising awareness about the damage caused and implementing targeted enforcement are key tactics in preventing such offences.

Overarching objectives:

- Coordinate with key partner agencies to ensure more effective and closer working practices.
- Develop a greater understanding of the impact certain offences have on habitats.
- Deploy proactive measures through police and partners to prevent and detect offences through operations and education.

Heritage Crime

As a new core priority, the group will work to address heritage crime in Wales focusing on preventing damage to heritage sites through collaboration between the police, partner agencies, and Cadw. Increasing officer knowledge is key as well as educating the public on protecting our heritage.

Overarching objectives:

- Develop training programs for rural officers and cadets to prevent and respond to heritage crime.
- Strengthen partnerships and improve coordination among police, Cadw, and other agencies.
- Increase public awareness about heritage preservation through community outreach and educational campaigns.



Mammals and EPS⁷

Wales faces various wildlife crimes that threaten species, such as bat offences, poaching, illegal hunting, and badger offences. Criminal activities also affect flora and fauna protected under CITES or European law.

A collaborative group of police and partners works to identify, prevent, and enforce against these crimes. They combine knowledge and experience to tackle issues and share best practices across the UK. Cooperation with local authorities is crucial to prevent unconsented planning work that harms species.

Overarching objectives:

- Provide immediate and professional response to offences involving mammals and EPS (European Protected Species).
- Enhance knowledge and best practices for dealing with species offences.
- Use specialist agency knowledge to aid investigations and prosecutions.

Networking Rural Support Services

This group which aims to link in with domestic abuse, mental health and suicide prevention support has been renamed to better reflect its main focus. Each of these subject areas is significant in its own right and crucial work is being conducted by police, dedicated agencies and partners in Wales. The priority group brings together key organisations and rural police who are frequently the first to engage with victims or patients in rural settings. The group ensures co-ordination, and a unified approach required to provide specialised training, knowledge, and support. These matters are not exclusive to urban environments but also manifest in rural communities, where the conditions that contribute to problems and the solutions for addressing them often differ. The police and our supporting agencies deliver frontline services, working collaboratively to offer essential services, enhanced protection, and raise awareness within farming communities.

Overarching objectives:

- Provide essential training for officers and partner agencies to manage crises in rural areas.
- Enhance the knowledge within the police and partner agencies regarding available resources and support.
- Develop an understanding of the rural environment, the pressures within the farming industry, and the support that is accessible.

All Wales Wildlife and Rural Crime Governance Structure

With a new Strategy comes the opportunity to refresh the governance structure to provide greater clarity on how overview and accountability will be exercised and how each level interacts with others.



The UK NPCC Wildlife and Rural Crime portfolio lead is Deputy Chief Constable of North Wales Police, Nigel Harrison. While policing and the criminal justice system is not devolved, the conditions that give rise to crime; its effects upon people, the environment and animals; as well as significant portions of law – for example wildlife – are within the portfolio of Welsh Government Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs Huw Irranca-Davies MS.



Contact: wildlife@gov.wales

Crimes should be reported by calling:

- ✓ 999 in an emergency
- ✓ 101 for any non-emergency incidents
- ✓ Via your local police area online website reporting form
- ✓ Or anonymously through CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111

For more information:

www.gov.wales/wales-wildlife-and-rural-crime-group

www.nationalruralcrimenetwork.net

www.nwcu.police.uk

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd
This document is also available in Welsh
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg
We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh



Police Heritage Strategy 2025 – 2028





Foreword

Pete Gillett NPCC Lead for Police Heritage

The aim of the National Police Heritage Strategy is to provide strategic direction to help support forces to develop and implement an effective police heritage offer. The strategy, is accompanied by guidance documents including the Maturity Matrix and Genealogy Guidance to assist forces to manage their heritage.

The realisation of the strategy in effectively utilising police heritage has far reaching benefits and opportunities including:

- Enhanced opportunities to engage and raise awareness of the history and positive changes that Policing has made to support improved trust and confidence and a greater understanding of policing by the public.
- Effective utilisation of the skills, knowledge and experience of retired officers and staff, students and other members of the public, who wish to actively support or engage in heritage initiatives, who in turn act as ambassadors for the force and policing.
- Supports the aspirations of National Citizens in Policing Strategy in relation to the involvement and utilisation of volunteers.
- Improved consistency of processes relating to the management of historic records; genealogy requests and support to cold case reviews.
- Supports force initiatives including the attraction, recruitment and onboarding of officers, staff and volunteers and the positive effects to the wellbeing of staff, through learning, celebrating and contributing to their force's heritage.



Background

The NPCC Police Heritage Portfolio was created in 2021 to enable the NPCC to support forces in understanding and adhering to the APP on Archiving in the Public Interest and develop their plans to protect and utilise their heritage.

The national police response to the Hillsborough Families Report in January 2023 highlighted that although Bishop James Jones' 2017 report on the 'Patronising Disposition of Unaccountable Power' recommended that all forces come under the Public Records Act (PRA) to improve retention and access to police records, this was actually impractical, and the PRA would not likely have made a significant difference and could have led to more records being disposed of. The police report went on to highlight the new heritage portfolio, which would 'assist in ensuring that forces are supported in understanding what records should be retained on a permanent basis, and how best to do this' in line with the APP.

Retaining records in line with the APP will ensure forces have the correct operational records to be able to comply with public enquiries, and retain sufficient corporate memory to be able to deal with legal challenges and ensure previous decisions are documented and preserved.

In addition, police heritage offers significant engagement benefits for forces, such as building links with communities on shared history. Building trust, educational links with schools/colleges and reaching out to people who are not engaged with policing.

The NPCC Police Heritage portfolio assists with:

- Advice and guidance relating to implementation and adherence to the APP on Archiving in the Public Interest.
- Creating a shared pool of museum and archive knowledge and expertise: connecting disciplines and creating a centralised approach to professionalising how we preserve our history. This includes complying with GDPR and other legislation around retaining and sharing information, specifically in relation to police heritage.
- Bringing together Information and Records Management professionals with those working/volunteering in heritage, recognising the significant overlap in these fields.
- Raising the profile of police heritage: it can be linked to recruitment opportunities and inspiring the next generation of recruits.
- Providing a forum to benchmark each force's approaches to preserving their history and supporting those who need it.
- Partnerships, collaborations and affiliations: opportunities for collections to be preserved across policing and other museums/organisations.



Vision:

Every police service understands the value of its own heritage and records, which are integrated into its day-to-day activities and its impact and importance to the wider community.

Mission:

Empower and support every police service in the country to actively retain, engage with and celebrate its heritage, using it to further its organisational priorities.

Introduction:

This strategy will be led by forces in conjunction with (where appropriate) relevant partners, such as independent groups, charities and archives. The NPCC Heritage Portfolio will provide a support network and opportunities to share best practice in understanding how records can be retained appropriately and heritage can be used to deliver current organisational aims and objectives.

Forces will already be aware of and in the process of implementing the APP on Archiving in the Public Interest.

This strategy is about providing a framework that all forces can use to get the best out of their heritage, including records and objects. It is not a 'one-size-fits-all' model but is about ensuring records with significant historic interest are retained appropriately, and discerning use of historical documents and objects to engage with people – within the organisation and the community they serve and represent.

Heritage can be defined as records and archives, objects and collections as well as personal testaments and experiences, buildings and locations. Heritage in this context does not infer a museum or collections in a dedicated space. It is anything that can be considered historically or socially significant pertaining to a police service, its officers, staff and community.

The strategy is based upon the NPCC Heritage Portfolio Maturity Model and the College of Policing [*Police Information and records management Code of Practice*](#), which includes *the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on Archiving in the Public Interest*.

Priorities:

- **Governance:** Enabling police services to understand and meet their legal and ethical responsibilities and manage risks relating to police heritage.
- **People and Organisation:** Enabling police services to recognise the skills and capabilities needed to ensure the protection of police heritage and involve the right stakeholders.
- **Digital and Technology:** The ability of a police service to use technical tools to identify, preserve and protect and share their heritage.
- **Data and Collections:** Enabling police services to understand and use the historical data, archives and records and objects it creates and preserve its heritage.



Deliverables:

Using the Heritage Maturity Model, it is expected that within the first year of implementation of this strategy all forces will have achieved at least the ‘Developing’ assessment level for each priority, and by the end of the strategy delivery period all forces will be able to demonstrate ‘Defined’ or above.

Refer to appendix A and B for the maturity model in relation to ‘Developing’ and ‘Defined’ status. The model can be used as a tool to assess progress in this area in relation to permanent archiving and heritage. The Heritage Portfolio is available to offer support and guidance to forces to help identify priorities, legal requirements of the APP for Archiving in the Public Interest and suggested next steps.

Outcomes:

These have been compiled with a view to supporting and linking with existing organisational strategies such as Neighbourhood Policing, public engagement, Citizens in Policing. Those forces actively focussing on optimising their record retention and heritage can expect to achieve the following outcomes:

- **Additional means of public engagement, including police cadets, external societies, and groups.** This could range from individuals visiting a dedicated museum site, visitors to HQ viewing a history corridor or display, a pop-up stand at awards’ ceremonies or attendance at community events and engagement days.
- **Evidence to support a learning organisation.** The ability to demonstrate your organisation is always learning, exchanging knowledge, collaborating and communicating. Learning from the past to inform the future.
- **Staff wellbeing, recruitment, and retention.** Using heritage to promote a sense of wellbeing and belonging within the organisation. Inspiring the next generation of new recruits.
- **Delivering legal responsibilities and managing reputational risk.** Ensuring that the risk of reputational damage or legal challenge through mismanagement of historic information is properly mitigated, working with associated volunteers and history groups. Compliance with the APP on Archiving in the Public Interest.
- **Stewarding the institutional memory** - the collective set of facts, concepts, experience, and knowledge held by a group of people and ensuring this can inform future direction.



National Police Heritage Strategy 2025 – 2028

VISION

Every police service understands the value of its own heritage and records, which are integrated into its day-to-day activities and its impact and importance to the wider community.

MISSION

Empower and support every police service in the country to actively retain, engage with and celebrate its heritage, using it to further its organisational priorities.

PRIORITIES

GOVERNANCE

PEOPLE & ORGANISATION

DIGITAL & TECHNOLOGY

DATA & COLLECTIONS

DELIVERABLES

Using the Heritage Maturity Model, it is expected that within the first year of this strategy (2025) all forces will have achieved at least the 'Developing' assessment level for each priority, and by the end of the strategy (2028) all forces will be able to demonstrate 'Defined' or above.

OUTCOMES

**Additional Public
Engagement**

**Evidence to Support a
Learning Organisation**

Staff Wellbeing

**DEVELOPING LEGAL
RESPONSIBILITIES & MANAGING
REPUTATIONAL RISK**

**STEWARDED THE INSTITUTIONAL
MEMORY**



Appendix A - Heritage Maturity Model: Elements of *Developing* Status

The ability of a police service to understand its legal and ethical responsibilities and risks relating to police heritage:

- 1.1 Force is aware of the need for a senior business owner for heritage – conversations have taken place or an owner has been confirmed.
- 1.2 Awareness of APP on Archiving in the Public Interest, senior stakeholder involvement and discussions underway for compliance
- 1.2 Heritage and records management staff/volunteers are in contact and working together, with clear terms of reference to ensure archiving of suitable materials.
- 1.3 Plans to set up heritage governance group, but not necessarily in place yet.

The ability of a police service to recognise the skills and capabilities needed to ensure the protection of police heritage and involve the right stakeholders.

- 2.1 Informal force heritage roles; staff with no training or experience
- 2.2 A willingness to engage in heritage matters, including participation in the NPCC Heritage Portfolio group
- 2.3 Awareness of the key role volunteers can play to support a heritage offering, with plans in place to engage volunteers.
- 2.4 Discussions being held around the most appropriate business model to select to support heritage, whether in-house museum/archives or outsourced model utilising a charity or external archive, or a combination such as a history group of internal and external participants, and downstream implications of choices made, such as grant support, physical space requirements, IT support, volunteering, etc.
- 2.5 Formal checklists/procedures being developed to support staff in developing and preserving the force's heritage

The ability of a police service to utilise technical tools to identify, preserve and share its heritage.

- 3.1 Technical tools identified, however not in place, for example databases and scanners. Considering the long term implications of digitisation on permanent preservation
- 3.2 Looking into or beginning to establish an online presence
- 3.3 Beginning to or in the process of documenting exactly what items/archives are held in the force's heritage collection

The ability of a police service to understand and utilise the historical data and objects it creates and preserve its heritage.

- 4.1 Informal storage arrangements, objects/records are held together in one or more locations, but not a formal permanent store.
- 4.2 Awareness of the need for key documentation such as risk assessment of data and objects, disaster recovery plan. Work has started on completing these documents.
- 4.3 Beginning to raise awareness of heritage and work taking place in force. Actively seeking support from staff/officers to develop.
- 4.4 Starting to consider how the force will comply with the APP, including identifying records suitable for permanent preservation and how these will be retained and managed.

Appendix B - Heritage Maturity Model: Elements of *Defined* Status

The ability of a police service to understand its legal and ethical responsibilities and risks relating to police heritage:

- 1.1 Entry on Register of Processing Activity (RoPA - where appropriate)
- 1.2 Information asset or business owner in place
- 1.3 Governance group established
- 1.4 Heritage strategy in line with local and NPCC objectives
- 1.5 Preservation in the public interest included as part of retention & disposal policy
- 1.6 Included on Force Information Asset Register (where applicable)
- 1.7 Compliance with APP on Archiving in the Public Interest well underway, possibly through a working group of interested parties, reporting to a strategic board of senior stakeholders

The ability of a police service to recognise the skills and capabilities needed to ensure the protection of police heritage and involve the right stakeholders.

- 2.1 That a force has appraised different approaches to heritage management as reflected in and accessible through the NPCC Heritage Portfolio, and identified a preferred approach, either in-house, with partners, or a combination thereof
- 2.2 Single point of contact in force for heritage, data and artefacts
- 2.3 Active volunteers from outside organisation
- 2.3 Organisational support for heritage group to manage and care for archive and collections
- 2.4 Understanding by Freedom of Information and data governance staff of their role regarding information being passed to museum/heritage collection

The ability of a police service to utilise technical tools to identify, preserve and share its heritage.

- 3.1 Limited technical tools to support Data and Artefact management – e.g. spreadsheet containing index of collection
- 3.2 Limited online presence
- 3.3 Digital preservation strategy outlined and in progress, ensuring the long term retention of key records and documents

The ability of a police service to understand and utilise the historical data and objects it creates and preserve its heritage.

- 4.1 Single point of contact in place to risk assess material as part of an acquisition and disposal process for collections. Long term retention forming part of review process for records, in line with APP.
- 4.2 Access to specialist knowledge on preservation and collections care (either in-house staff or external partners)
- 4.3 Access to appropriate storage in terms of security, environment, access and space
- 4.4 Ensure long term preservation, care and security for collections and information. Ensuring permanent preservation of, and access to, records selected in compliance with the APP



Photos courtesy of the following forces – Metropolitan Police Service, West Midlands Police, South Wales and Lancashire