

Police Report Card

The [Police Report Card](#) is the only 'one-stop shop' for information about risk, cost and police performance. The public care about police effectiveness and efficiency to the extent that they connect these things with their own safety and quality of life, and that of their family, friends and neighbours. No-one wants to live in an area that is blighted by crime and anti-social behaviour. So we start with information on how safe is the place where you live, and what are the police and other public bodies doing to make it even safer?

The public appetite for information about police performance is limited. Reams of statistics are of no interest – apart from anything else, there is little trust in official numbers. And while people do understand that some important police activities are largely hidden from view, such as counter-terrorism, it's what happens locally – my street, my village, and my estate – and visibly that attracts most public interest. *When I call the police, do they respond quickly? When I report a problem, is something done about it?* The audience for the [Police Report Card](#) is unequivocally the public and not professionals, academics or commentators. The 'front page' provides at-a-glance information on 'How safe am I?' with a few simple graphics that show the risk of being a victim of burglary, violence or car crime in your local area. This is supplemented by information on the cost of policing – am I getting a good deal for what I contribute in taxes?

At the next level down, the report card covers four areas – local crime & policing, protection from serious harm, staffing & costs, and confidence & satisfaction. Here, the information shows relative performance and each force's prospects for the future – this particular police area compared with national or similar force averages – in a simple, accessible format. To ease understanding, HMIC will award an overall grade for three of these four areas in 2010 (local policing, protection from serious harm and confidence and satisfaction) with the fourth area graded from 2011. For those with an appetite to know more, the [Police Report Card](#) can be drilled down further to show increasing levels of detail – including the evidence base for the grades awarded.

What's different about the [Police Report Card](#)? Compared to force websites, media sites, NPIA and others, it is uniquely:

- Independent
- Authoritative – evidence-based and written by professionals
- Challengingly comparative – it shows how a force is doing over time/against peers and especially important it shows the prospects for improvement
- It's qualitative, not just numbers-driven
- Information is tiered, moving from simple at-a-glance positions to detailed evidence using a drill-down approach, and thus of value to professionals
- Uses plain English, avoids jargon and technical language
- Employs a range of graphics such as heat maps to improve accessibility
- Is dynamic, with key information and evidence added and updated as often as practicable
- Interactive – if a user wants a particular question or basis of comparison added to the [Police Report Card](#) we will consider that request, and we provide links to all other websites of relevance
- Provides a basis for action – it points out how to challenge local performance, and helps citizens to understand relative risk and thus how such risks might be managed or mitigated