

HMICFRS: Both sides of the coin The police and National Crime Agency's response to vulnerable people in 'county lines' drug offending (thematic inspection)**Response from: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Hampshire**

While Hampshire Constabulary was not a part of this thematic inspection, we value the findings and outcomes, and any learning points on which we can implement. County lines drug offending exploit the most vulnerable young people and adults in our communities. The recognition that this 'causes significant harm to local communities, including knife crime. And there are clear links between county lines and other crimes, including modern slavery and human trafficking¹' just highlights the hidden and rippling impact this crime has upon our communities.

County lines is a complex area, and the devastating impact this can have on individuals, families and communities is extensive. We recognise that county lines drug offending is often hidden and any intelligence gathering is often just the tip of the iceberg. We do not shy away from the challenges surrounding county lines, it is not for police alone to tackle this problem, and we must all continue to work together to provide early intervention to avoid young people becoming involved in these networks. Safeguarding and protecting those who need it is essential, by recognising, supporting and protecting young people who have been subject to adverse childhood experiences that make them more vulnerable to becoming targeted and involved in the future. We continue to closely monitor the decisions made by Hampshire Constabulary around county lines drug offending.

Recommendations: No force or OPCC level recommendations were identified.

¹ <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/both-sides-of-the-coin-police-nca-response-vulnerable-people-county-lines-drug-offending.pdf>