

## **Police complaints – Annual statistics for England and Wales 2024/25**

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 The annual police complaints statistics were published on 27 November 2025, this covers the period 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025 (2024/25). This is the fifth set of statistics published since the new police complaints regime was introduced on 1 February 2020.

### **2. Findings**

- 2.1 There is recognition by the IOPC that there has been significant change to the complaints system and the consistency of the data reported relies on police forces applying the guidance correctly. They advise to remain cautious when interpreting the statistics and further development and evaluation is currently taking place.
- 2.2 In 2024/25, there have been 94,940 complaint cases logged by forces nationally. This was an 11% increase on the total logged in 2023/24, which is likely linked to the simplifying of the system, force's centralizing their receipt of complaint and the widening in the definition of a complaint to 'any expression of dissatisfaction'. This means many more complaints will be logged than in previous years. The data shows significant variations. While the total number of complaints has increased, some forces have reported a reduction in the number of complaints they received.

In Hampshire, there were 3,752 cases logged. This puts Hampshire 6<sup>th</sup> out of 44 forces in terms of volume alone. This was a 6% increase on the total logged in 2023/24 where Hampshire was placed 4<sup>rd</sup> out of 44. Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire have moved into the top five displacing Hampshire to 6<sup>th</sup>.

- 2.3 It is recognised there are considerable differences in the size of police forces across England and Wales, which impacts on the number of complaint cases.

The national average is 373 complaint cases per 1,000 employees.

The Hampshire rate is 596 complaint cases per 1,000, putting it 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 44 forces (compared to 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2023/24). This is behind Cleveland Police with 832 per 1,000 employees and Surrey with 602 per 1,000 employees.

Hampshire's average was 60% higher than the national average and places them highest in their Most Similar Force of police forces by 20%. In effect, Hampshire are recording more complaints than similar forces. The model adopted in Hampshire is that all expressions of dissatisfaction and complaint matters are recorded centrally by the PSD's Business Support Team.

- The OPCC is keen to understand the themes and trends for Hampshire's average being the highest in the MSF and will challenge the force through the Accountability Board and local oversight meetings.

- 2.4 On average, it takes forces seven working days to log complaints from the date they were made, although most forces (29) logged complaints in five working days or less. The average in Hampshire is one working day.

In terms of initial contact with the complainant to understand their complaint and to seek their views on how it should be handled, the average number of days to do this is nine working days.

In Hampshire, the average is two working day, putting it in the top 12 forces for timeliness in contacting the complainant. This is a change from one working day in the previous year. It is acknowledged that Hampshire has provided clarity to their recording of data to ensure this is meaningful contact.

- 2.5 The new complaints system allows for complaints to be dealt with informally if it can be resolved quickly and to the satisfaction of the complainant. If this is not possible, or the complainant wishes it to be handled formally or given the nature of the allegation, it must be formally recorded (in accordance with legislation and with a right of review at the end of the process).

Nationally, 31,687 complaint cases were formally recorded. In Hampshire, 404 cases were recorded formally, putting it 26<sup>th</sup> out of 44 forces. In 2023/24 they were positioned 24<sup>th</sup>.

The approach adopted by PSD's Complaint Resolution Unit is to remedy complaints promptly to the complainants' satisfaction through informal measures, such as by providing an explanation by email or phone after making initial enquires from available sources of information. The flexibility in the new system means there will be different ways to handle complaints and some forces will choose to handle matters in different ways to other forces.

This is illustrated in Hampshire with 88% of cases handed informally, an increase on 75% in 2022/23. Compared to the national average of 65%.

34% of formally recorded complaints were initially handled informally.

- The OPCC is keen to understand PSD's initial handling decision of complaints which has resulted in a decrease in complaints being recorded formally compared with the previous year of 438. The OPCC will challenge the force through the Accountability Board and local oversight meetings.

- 2.6 A complaint case may contain multiple allegations, and each allegation is allocated a category which aims to capture the root of the dissatisfaction. For Hampshire, the nature of the complaints are ordered by volume as follows:

- Delivery of duties or service (covers police action after contact with the public and the general level of service the police offer. Typically, these types of complaints could be about property not being returned or a member of the public not being given a regular update on progress after reporting a crime);

- Police powers, policies and procedures (including use of force, stop and search, arrest/detention);
- Individual behaviours (unprofessional attitude, impolite tone and language, lack of fairness and impartiality);
- Handling of or damage to property/premises;
- Access and/or disclosure of information.

2.7 The time taken to informally handle allegations is an average of 20 days nationally. In Hampshire, it takes 14 working days and positions them at 17<sup>th</sup> out of 44 forces. This is an increase on last year's 6 days where they were joint 4<sup>th</sup> quickest in the country.

In 79% of cases, Hampshire provided an explanation to remedy the complaint informally.

2.8 For formal allegations handled otherwise than by investigation, the national average is 109 working days, in Hampshire, it takes an average of 87 days (79 days in 2023/24).

For formal allegations handled by investigation, the national average is 220 working days, in Hampshire, it takes an average of 212 days (253 days in 2023/24). This illustrates an improvement in the investigation time in Hampshire.

A complaint case is considered finalised when all actions are completed. This includes the time to make a review, for the review body to deal with the review, the time it takes for review recommendations to be actioned, the implementation of a reflective practice review process, outcomes of unsatisfactory performance procedures to be decided and misconduct/criminal proceedings to conclude.

<b>Hampshire – Formal complaint cases resulting in actions below:</b>	
Explanation	62%
No further action	25%
Apology	8%
Referral to Reflective Practice Review Process (RPRP)	2%
Learning from reflection	1%
Organisational learning	1%

2.9 Nationally, of those formal allegations not investigated, the majority (67%) found the service provided was acceptable. Of those formal allegations that were investigated, there was no case to answer in 52% of instances.

For Hampshire, it was determined that the service provided was acceptable in 54% of formal allegations. For those handled by investigation, 77% were found to be service provided was acceptable. Of those formal allegations that were investigated, there was no case to answer in 63% of instances and a case to answer in 25%.

2.10 A complainant has a right to apply for a review where a complaint has been formally recorded. The independent review body will be either the OPCC or the IOPC, depending on the circumstances of the complaint.

2.11 These are the figures for the number of reviews that have been undertaken:

<b>Police force</b>	<b>Number of complaint cases finalised under Schedule 3</b>	<b>Total LPB reviews received</b>	<b>Total IOPC reviews received</b>	<b>Total reviews received</b>	<b>Number of reviews as % of complaint cases finalised</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Hampshire	405	48	67	115	28%
<b>National Total</b>	<b>31,687</b>	<b>4,247</b>	<b>2,428</b>	<b>6,675</b>	<b>21%</b>

The number of complaint cases finalised under Schedule 3 in 2023/24 was 415 and 35% resulted in a review.

The model adopted by Hampshire has resulted in more complaints being recorded informally. The number of complaints being formally recorded is decreasing and the review rate is decreasing.

The main reasons complaint cases are recorded under schedule 3 are due to dissatisfaction after initial handling 34% and AA determines 42%.

2.12 The average number of working days for the OPCC to complete LPB reviews is 78 days, the national average is 48 and the most similar force is 54 days.

The average number of working days for the IOPC to complete Hampshire reviews is 169, the national average for the IOPC is 148.

2.13 Of those reviews that were completed during the 2024/25 year by the OPCC, the percentage of complaint outcomes that were not reasonable and proportionate was 29%, the national average is 21%. The OPCC made a recommendation to the PSD for each upheld review. (The OPCC is the review body mainly for complaints handled otherwise than by investigation).

Of those reviews that were completed during the 2024/25 year by the IOPC, the percentage of complaint outcomes non-investigation that were not reasonable and proportionate was 16%, and for complaint outcomes by investigation it was 38%.