

# Our Quality of Service Commitment



Heddlu  
Gwent  
Police

## Foreword by the Chief Constable, MIKE TONGE

The public should receive the same high quality of service whenever they are in contact with the police, regardless of where, how or for what reason that contact takes place.

With this in mind, we have introduced a set of customer service standards. These are set out in the Quality of Service Commitment (QoSC), and Heddli Gwent Police is compliant with them. These service standards have been developed and agreed by the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA).

**The introduction of the QoSC is a key development in working towards a more citizen-focused approach to policing that reflects the needs and expectations of individuals and local communities.**



# Our Quality of Service Commitment

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# Introduction – Our Quality of Service Commitment

## Heddlu Gwent Police

*Delivering Safer Communities*

**Our Vision** - We will deliver safer communities in Gwent, through people who are engaged, informed and reassured and by: delivering ward based Neighbourhood Policing, improving the quality of service to users, being accessible and responsive and being accountable and courteous.

**Our Commitments** - We are committed to providing a citizen focused service based on quality and value for money. This document outlines our service commitments to you in the following areas: -

- making it easier to contact us
- providing a professional and high quality service
- dealing with your initial contact
- keeping you informed
- ensuring that your voice counts
- victims of crime.

It also explains what we are doing to meet those commitments now, what we intend to do in the future and our longer-term plans.

**Other services** - This document also explains:

- how we meet our obligations under the Freedom of Information Act
- what to do if you want to make a complaint about us
- how to get in touch if you want to provide us with feedback.

The commitments are listed below. To find out more detail with regard to any individual commitment, just click on the text of commitment you want to know about. Within that information, where you see the symbol [?] you can access more detailed information or advice from other websites. Just **click** to find out.

# Our Service Commitments to You – A Summary

Click on a number in the list below to access further information on that subject and then use the **BACK** button at the bottom left-hand corner of the page you reach to return to this list.

## MAKING IT EASIER TO CONTACT US

We are committed to ensuring that our services are accessible to the public and responsive to individual and community and business needs. Our commitments are to:

1. Provide equality of access to services and information
2. Provide a range of ways to access our services that address the needs of users.
3. Consult with those who use our services and the local community, about what is important to them, and publish specific local commitments.
4. Provide an easy to understand range of information, focusing on the areas of service you have told us are important to you.
5. Widely publicise the details of how you can access police services in your local area.

## PROVIDING A PROFESSIONAL AND HIGH QUALITY SERVICE

Our staff aims to provide a thorough and professional service, whatever the reason for your contact with us. Our commitment is to:-

6. Act with integrity and treat everyone we deal with fairly and openly.
7. Treat you politely and with respect.
8. Take your concerns seriously and explain what we are doing to address them, including whether or not we are taking action and why.
9. Provide you with the help and advice you need.

## DEALING WITH YOUR INITIAL ENQUIRY

We will always give priority to emergencies; however we recognise that you may wish to contact us for many different reasons. Our commitment is:

10. To ensure that we properly understand what you are telling us.
11. To explain how we are going to deal with your enquiry.
12. Wherever possible, provide you with a reference number.
13. Where your enquiry requires specialist knowledge or expertise, transfer you to the appropriate named person or department for your enquiry.
14. Where the appropriate person is not on duty and we cannot connect you, we will explain the delay, give you the opportunity to leave a message and make you aware of the likely length of time it will be before someone will respond to your message.
15. If your enquiry is not an emergency but requires a police officer/ member of staff to visit you, we will arrange a suitable time with you. If something changes and we cannot keep to the arrangement we have made, we will inform you at the earliest opportunity.
16. If your enquiry is about something that the police cannot deal with, we will tell you if there is another organisation that can help you and if so, how to get in touch with them.

## **KEEPING YOU INFORMED**

We recognise the importance of being kept up to date on the progress of your enquiry, our commitment is to:

17. Provide you with the details necessary for you to be able to talk to someone about your enquiry. In most cases this will be a reference number and the name and contact details of the person dealing with your enquiry.
18. Update you at a mutually convenient time and in an agreed way.
19. Take into account concerns you may have about confidentiality.
20. If we have not already been in touch, we will contact you monthly to let you know whether we are still actively investigating your case and when we will review that decision. If we are not investigating we will explain the reasons for that decision.

## **ENSURING YOUR VOICE COUNTS**

In order to help us improve the service we provide we want to know your views. Our commitment is to:

21. Provide a range of ways in which you can let us know your views and widely publicise these locally.
22. Respond to you within 10 working days when requested.
23. Publish regular updates about what we are doing to improve our services as a result of views received.

## VICTIMS OF CRIME

If you are in contact with us because you have been a victim of crime, we will comply with the specific commitments under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime 2006 [\[?\]](#):

24. Identify and support vulnerable victims and children
25. Provide you with a victim of crime leaflet (and other relevant leaflets depending on the nature of your case).
26. Unless you ask us not to do so, pass your details to Victim Support within two days.
27. Keep you informed of the progress of the investigation, including arrest, caution, reprimand, warning, charge, release on bail and court proceedings.
28. Invoke 'special measures' where appropriate to assist you in giving evidence at court.

In addition to these commitments, a range of other formal mechanisms also govern how we interact with you and the level of service that we must provide. These include the Freedom of Information Act 2000 [\[?\]](#) and the Data Protection Act 1998 [\[?\]](#).

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

We are committed to complying with the Data Protection Act 1998 [\[?\]](#) and Freedom of Information Act 2000 [\[?\]](#):

29. Respond to any appropriate request for personal information within 40 calendar days (Data Protection Act 1988).
30. Respond to any request for any other information within 20 working days (Freedom of Information Act 2000).
31. Ensure that any information on our website is accurate and kept under review.

## COMPLAINTS

We are committed to listening and responding to your concerns and complaints. You might be dissatisfied with the service you receive, for any number reasons that could relate to:

- the direction and control of Heddlu Gwent Police, e.g. policies, allocation of resources across geographic areas, etc. or
- the inappropriate conduct of any individual serving with the Force or
- a failure to deliver services in accordance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime 2006 [?].

If your complaint concerns the direction and control of Heddlu Gwent Police it can be reported to the Force [?] or the Gwent Police Authority [?]. Our commitment to you in this instance is to:

32. Record, investigate and respond to you as appropriate.
33. Be as open and transparent, as the maintenance of effective policing will allow.
34. Set local standards for the timeliness of our response, the information to be supplied to you and the opportunity available to you to seek further information if you are not content with the initial response.
35. Use this information to inform the development of future local policy and practice.
36. Use this information to increase our understanding of how you wish to be treated.

If your complaint concerns the inappropriate conduct of any individual serving with the police it can be reported to this Force [?], the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) [?] or through the Citizens Advice Bureau [?]. The IPCC is the organisation that oversees the system for dealing with a complaint about inappropriate conduct. The role of the IPCC is to ensure that complaints are handled in an open, efficient and fair way. In relation to a complaint about inappropriate conduct our commitment to you is:

37. Whenever possible and with your agreement, to attempt local resolution.
38. Investigate the complaint appropriately.
39. Adhere to the values and guidance of the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

If your complaint is about failure to deliver services according to the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime 2006 [?], it should be reported to this Force [?]. If you are not satisfied with the response we give you, you have a right of further complaint to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration [?] whose job is to enforce this Code.

In the case of any complaint made to us, our commitment to you is to:

40. Demonstrate police accountability.
41. Operate to improve standards.
42. Be responsive to the needs of the complainant.
43. Be just and proportionate.
44. Be timely and effective.
45. Be open to public scrutiny and sensitive to the public interest.
46. Increase public confidence in our ability to deal effectively with your concerns and complaints.

We will keep these commitments under review and in laying out our commitments to provide quality services to you, we hope you will be reassured enough to have complete confidence in your Police Service.

If you have any comments you would like to make about our Quality of Service Commitments please write to:

**Superintendent  
Citizen Focus and Partnership  
Gwent Police Headquarters  
Croesyceiliog  
Cwmbran  
NP44 2XJ**

Or you can submit your comments electronically by emailing them to: [QoS@gwent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:QoS@gwent.pnn.police.uk)

# Individual Commitments in Detail

## MAKING IT EASIER TO CONTACT US

### 1. Provide equality of access to services and information

What we do now	What we intend to do (including long term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have improved all buildings to which the public has access, so they comply with the Disability Discrimination Act [?].</li> <li>• We have installed Hearing Loops in all Police Station enquiry offices for those in the community with hearing impairments.</li> <li>• We have installed minicom machines [?] in our Communication Suite for those in the community with hearing impairments.</li> <li>• For the deaf, hard of hearing or persons with speech impairments we provide both an emergency Short Message Service Texting (SMS) and dedicated fax line.</li> <li>• The Heddlu Gwent Police Welsh Language Scheme [?] aims to support the Welsh language to facilitate its use both as a business language, and also by the public in their dialogue with the Police. We work in collaboration with other Welsh Forces.</li> <li>• The Force subscribes to ‘Language Line’, [?] a facility that provides a translation service when required by the Communications Suite and all Police Station enquiry offices.</li> <li>• We provide a range of supporting services to assist witnesses and victims when required to attend court, and we comply with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime [?].</li> <li>• We have both a Race Equality Scheme (2005) and a Disability Equality Scheme (2006) (a Gender Equality Scheme is currently being written); each includes a three-year action plan which sets out the steps that we will take to promote equality as a service provider. It is fundamental to the way we operate that we promote equality of opportunity between one person and another and to eliminate unlawful discrimination.</li> </ul>	

## 2. Provide a range of ways to access our services that address the needs of users.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including long-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have 24-hour Police Station enquiry office availability at Newport, Cwmbran, Blackwood and Ebbw Vale Police Stations.</li> <li>• The Force provides Police Station enquiry offices in all major towns across the Heddlu Gwent Police area.</li> <li>• The Force has an Internet site <a href="http://www.gwent.police.uk">[?]</a> (www.gwent.police.uk) through which you can access our services.</li> <li>• We identify and publish details of how to contact Neighbourhood Policing Teams that the public has access to for all ward areas via our Internet site (www.gwent.police.uk) <a href="#">[?]</a>.</li> <li>• We arrange local surgeries through Neighbourhood Policing Teams.</li> <li>• We provide a user response through the 999 system.</li> <li>• We publish Local Policing Summaries <a href="#">[?]</a> that provide details of Neighbourhood Policing Teams <a href="#">[?]</a>, Policy Authority members <a href="#">[?]</a> for their area and Divisional Commanders.</li> <li>• The Force has a centralised Communication Suite for non-emergency calls.</li> <li>• We have installed minicom machines <a href="#">[?]</a> in our Communication Suite for those in the community with hearing impairments.</li> <li>• We reply to all correspondence with details of a named person and a contact telephone number.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are investing in development of mobile data technology to support our officers and staff when on patrol and when they are dealing with incidents so as to reduce bureaucracy, increase the amount of time they are able to spend on patrol and make contacting them easier</li> <li>• To improve public confidence, feelings of security and satisfaction, we are reviewing the way in which we respond to your calls, depending on the type of incident reported. This will determine the most appropriate response given. This work will also develop a more integrated approach to the way we manage our staff so that our resources can be more effectively matched with the demands you make.</li> </ul>

**3. Consult with those who use our services and the local community about what is important to them, and publish specific local commitments.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including long-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a Consultation Strategy <a href="#">(?)</a> that aims to promote and encourage community participation to insure that views are reflected in the way which policing services are delivered.</li> <li>• We take part in ward based Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings <a href="#">[?]</a>, where local priorities are identified, that Neighbourhood Policing Teams are then tasked to deal with, and at following meetings report on progress to the community.</li> <li>• We publish ward based priorities identified at PACT meetings upon our Force website <a href="#">[?]</a></li> <li>• The Force conducts customer public satisfaction surveys <a href="#">[?]</a> and ‘Best Value Review’.</li> <li>• We consult through Community Council Meetings, Neighbourhood Policing Team surgeries, Community Safety Partnerships <a href="#">[?]</a>, an Independent Advisory Group <a href="#">[?]</a>, and by considering your individual views following completion of a questionnaire which is available on our website <a href="#">[?]</a>.</li> <li>• We consult with an External Policing Stakeholder Group <a href="#">[?]</a>.</li> <li>• We are a member of the Gwent Criminal Justice Board <a href="#">[?]</a>.</li> <li>• Our Engagement Strategy sets out how we consult and engage with the Community. The information gained is then fed into, and directs the work of Neighbourhood Policing Teams <a href="#">[?]</a>.</li> <li>• Force and Local Policing Plans <a href="#">[?]</a> are published annually in addition to Local Policing Summaries <a href="#">[?]</a>.</li> </ul>	

**4. Provide a range of information that focuses on areas of service that you have told us are important to you, ensuring the information is easy to understand.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including long-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Force has an informative, easy to use, and up to date Website [?].</li> <li>• We comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 [?] and provide a publication guide [?].</li> <li>• We have a Communication Officer in each division who liaises regularly with local media to promote and report information, and initiatives that effect local communities.</li> </ul>	

**5. Widely publicise details of how you can access police services in your local area.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including long-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We provide signs outside all police stations with details of opening times and out of hour's arrangements. This information is also available on the Internet Website at <a href="http://www.gwent.police.co.uk">www.gwent.police.co.uk</a> [?].</li> <li>• We have direct telephone links outside all Police Stations, which will enable you to make contact with a 24 hour station.</li> <li>• We have entries in the local telephone directories.</li> <li>• We publish contact details in the Local Policing Plan [?], and Local Policing Summaries [?].</li> <li>• We publish contact details of each of our Neighbourhood Policing Teams on the force website [?] along with details of where and when each team will be holding a meeting in each ward.</li> <li>• We use local media and posters to publicise both Neighbourhood Policing Team surgeries and Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings.</li> </ul>	

## PROVIDING A PROFESSIONAL AND HIGH QUALITY SERVICE

### 6. Act with integrity and treat everyone we deal with fairly and openly.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including Long term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a diversity officer [?] to develop and scrutinise Force policies and procedures.</li> <li>• We train all front line officers to use Stop and Search powers in line with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act [?].</li> <li>• We have trained our first contact Call Handlers in line with the National Call Handling Standards [?].</li> <li>• We have a 'customer service' training programme that all employees are expected to embrace. These principles shall be applied to give the service standards that Gwent Police requires from both frontline and support departments.</li> <li>• We provide privacy to callers to police stations when required.</li> <li>• At all 'designated' Custody Units we now have facilities available to improve the privacy of persons being released from custody or answering bail.</li> <li>• We have an Independent Custody Visitor scheme [?] in operation for all Custody Units.</li> <li>• The Force Professional Standards Unit provides training for all new entrants on integrity issues.</li> <li>• We deal with complaints fairly and honestly [?].</li> <li>• We seek critical advice from our Independent Advisory Group [?].</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are working towards compliance in line with National Centre for Policing Excellence guidelines for Custody and Detention of prisoners (Target date - 2010).</li> </ul>

## 7. Treat you politely and with respect.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including Long term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have trained all first contact Call Handlers in the National Call Handling Standards [?].</li> <li>• We insure that all policies and procedures are compliant with the Human Rights Act 1988 [?].</li> <li>• The Chief Constable has conducted a series of workshops, involving every police officer and member of staff within Heddlu Gwent Police, which encompasses the importance of being accountable and courteous to everyone with whom we come into contact.</li> </ul>	

## 8. Take your concerns seriously and explain what we are doing to address them, including whether or not we are taking action and why.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including Long term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a ‘customer service’ training programme that all employees are expected to embrace. These principles shall be applied to give the service standards that Gwent Police requires from both frontline and support departments.</li> <li>• We listen to your concerns through Community Safety Partnerships [?], local consultative groups, Neighbourhood Policing Team surgeries, and we actively gather intelligence that we develop and act upon through the National Intelligence Model [?].</li> <li>• We strive to resolve concerns at first point of contact.</li> <li>• We always respond to correspondence from a named person.</li> <li>• We hold public meetings when appropriate.</li> <li>• We refer complaints to our Standards Unit [?] and where appropriate, to the Independent Police Complaints Commission [?].</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve public confidence, feelings of security and satisfaction, we are reviewing the way in which we respond to your calls, depending on the type of incident reported. This will determine the most appropriate response given. This work will also develop a more integrated approach to the way we manage our staff so that our resources can be more effectively matched with the demands you make.</li> </ul>

## 9. Provide you with the help and advice you need.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including Long term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Police Officer or member of Police Staff will either deal with your enquiry in its entirety or where necessary call upon the relevant and appropriate specialist support.</li> <li>• The Force Communication Suite has links to partner agencies [?] to ensure that non-Police incidents e.g. noise or abandoned vehicles that you report to us are dealt with by the appropriate agency.</li> <li>• We have a Frequently Asked Questions database [?], to which all operators in the Force Communication Suite have access.</li> <li>• We have trained all first contact Call Handlers in the National Call Handling Standards [?] that includes a system of quality assurance.</li> <li>• The Force provides a highly visible policing service including Response Officers and Neighbourhood Policing Teams [?].</li> <li>• We provide Police Station enquiry offices in all major towns.</li> <li>• We provide help and advice on our Website (www.gwent.police.uk) [?] which is regularly updated.</li> <li>• We actively refer the elderly, vulnerable and disadvantaged people to the Gwent Bobby Van Trust [?] who can attend your home and improve security by fitting various security devices and provide advice so as to reduce the fear of crime.</li> <li>• We have a 'customer service' training programme that all employees are expected to embrace. These principles shall be applied to give the service standards that Gwent Police requires from both frontline and support departments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are carrying out a fundamental review to ensure that the organisation is configured to deliver the best possible service to the people of Gwent with the resources available. The programme will also insure that support services are streamlined and designed to support the delivery of operational services to the public as effectively as possible. (Target date 2011)</li> <li>• To improve public confidence, feelings of security and satisfaction, we are reviewing the way in which we respond to your calls, depending on the type of incident reported. This will determine the most appropriate response given. This work will also develop a more integrated approach to the way we manage our staff so that our resources can be more effectively matched with the demands you make.</li> </ul>

## DEALING WITH YOUR INITIAL ENQUIRY

### 10. Ensure that we properly understand what you are telling us.

What we do now	What we intend to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Force conducts customer public satisfaction surveys and 'Best Value Review' [?].</li> <li>• We have Neighbourhood Teams in each ward area that will listen to your concerns [?].</li> <li>• We have an Inspector in each Division who deals specifically with Community Safety issues [?].</li> <li>• We have an Engagement Strategy that sets out how we consult and engage with the Community. The information gained then contributes towards how we deal with both strategic issues and at a local level directs the work of Neighbourhood Policing Teams.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve public confidence, feelings of security and satisfaction, we are reviewing the way in which we respond to your calls, depending on the type of incident reported. This will determine the most appropriate response given. This work will also develop a more integrated approach to the way we manage our staff so that our resources can be more effectively matched with the demands you make.</li> </ul>

### 11. Explain how we are going to deal with your enquiry.

What we do now	What we intend to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Police Officer or member of Police Staff will either deal with your enquiry in its entirety or where necessary call upon the relevant and appropriate specialist support.</li> <li>• We provide a nationally distributed Guide for Victims of Crime [?] that sets out your rights under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime [?].</li> <li>• We have a 'customer service' training programme that all employees are expected to embrace. These principles shall be applied to give the service standards that Gwent Police requires from both frontline and support departments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve public confidence, feelings of security and satisfaction, we are reviewing the way in which we respond to your calls, depending on the type of incident reported. This will determine the most appropriate response given. This work will also develop a more integrated approach to the way we manage our staff so that our resources can be more effectively matched with the demands you make.</li> </ul>

**12. Wherever possible provide you with a reference number.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including long term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We allocate a unique incident reference number to every incident that you report, and give it to you should you need it.</li> <li>• We give you a unique crime reference number every time you report a crime, together with a crime information leaflet [?].</li> <li>• In every instance where we are able, we will give you the name and number of the officer or member of staff dealing with the matter.</li> </ul>	

**13. Where your enquiry requires specialist knowledge or expertise, transfer you to the appropriate named person or department for your enquiry.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including long term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We gain information from you in order to decide the nature of the incident and the most appropriate person to deal with your enquiry.</li> <li>• If we identify that your call is not a police matter, your call will be passed on to the appropriate agency or a telephone number will be provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve public confidence, feelings of security and satisfaction, we are reviewing the way in which we respond to your calls, depending on the type of incident reported. This will determine the most appropriate response given. This work will also develop a more integrated approach to the way we manage our staff so that our resources can be more effectively matched with the demands you make.</li> </ul>

**14. Where the appropriate person is not on duty and we cannot connect you, we will explain the delay, give you the opportunity to leave a message and make you aware of the likely length of time before someone will respond to our message.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a centralised electronic resource management system that enables us to identify when any specific officer is next on duty.</li> <li>• We have a timed reminder facility on our incident management system for routine messages to be passed to patrolling officers who work varying shift systems.</li> <li>• We have Voice Mail facilities so as you can leave a telephone message.</li> <li>• The Force Communication Suite has the facility to email information to relevant members of staff.</li> </ul>	

**15. If your enquiry is not an emergency but requires a police officer or other member of staff to visit you, we will arrange a suitable time with you. If something changes and we cannot keep to the arrangement we have made, we will inform you at the earliest opportunity.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a timed reminder facility on our incident management system for the deployment of routine officer enquiries.</li> <li>• We undertake to get an appropriate member of staff to visit you as soon as possible but incidents of a higher priority do take precedence.</li> <li>• We will endeavour to re-contact and inform you of any delay.</li> <li>• We have a centralised electronic resource management system that enables us to identify when any specific officer is next on duty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve public confidence, feelings of security and satisfaction, we are reviewing the way in which we respond to your calls, depending on the type of incident reported. This will determine the most appropriate response given. This work will also develop a more integrated approach to the way we manage our staff so that our resources can be more effectively matched with the demands you make.</li> </ul>

**16. If your enquiry is about something that the police cannot deal with, tell you if there is another organisation that can help you and if so, how to get in touch with them.**

<b>What we do now</b>	<b>What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have trained our Call Handling Staff to access a database to provide you with immediate, consistent help and advice on your enquiry. If it is not a police matter, we have the information as to where to direct you.</li><li>• We have Police Station Enquiry Offices that can access useful information locally <a href="#">[?]</a>.</li></ul>	

## KEEPING YOU INFORMED

**17. Provide you with the details necessary for you to be able to talk to someone about your enquiry. In most cases, a reference number and the name/contact details of the person dealing with your enquiry.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will give you the name and number of the Officer or member of staff dealing with your enquiry wherever possible.</li> <li>• We allocate a unique incident reference number to every incident that you report, and give it to you should you need it.</li> <li>• We give you a unique crime reference number when you report a crime, together with a crime information leaflet [?] whenever possible.</li> <li>• We have a centralised electronic resource management system that enables us to identify when any specific officer is next on duty.</li> </ul>	

**18. Update you at a mutually convenient time and in an agreed way.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a timed reminder facility on our incident management system for the deployment of routine officer enquiries.</li> <li>• The Force Witness Care Unit [?] will provide you with the necessary information if you are required to attend court.</li> <li>• If you are a victim of crime we will update you at a mutually convenient time and in an agreed way.</li> </ul>	

**19. Take into account concerns you may have about confidentiality.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We provide private interview rooms at police stations.</li> <li>• We re-contact people at their convenience.</li> <li>• We have policies and procedures that reflect the need for confidentiality when dealing with vulnerable victims and witnesses.</li> <li>• We are compliant with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 [?] and Data Protection Act 1988 [?], and will ask for your permission before sharing information on you with other agencies.</li> </ul>	

**20. If we have not already been in touch with you, we will contact you monthly to let you know whether we are still actively investigating your case and when we will review that decision. If we are not investigating we will explain the reasons for that decision.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have trained all operational staff to comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime [?].</li> <li>• We have a new Crime Recording System that enhances our ability to manage your case and update you appropriately.</li> </ul>	

## ENSURING YOUR VOICE COUNTS

### 21. Provide a range of ways in which you can let us know your views and publicise these locally.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a joint Consultation Strategy with the Gwent Police Authority [?].</li> <li>• We consult through community council meetings, Neighbourhood Policing Team surgeries, Police and Communities Together meetings (PACT), Community Safety Partnerships [?] and an Independent Advisory Group [?].</li> <li>• We endeavour to deal with all non-emergency contact calls at first point of contact.</li> <li>• We can place a number of electronic information kiosks in public locations, so as we can collect and exchange information from you on a local basis.</li> <li>• The Force conducts customer public satisfaction surveys [?] and 'Best Value Review'.</li> </ul>	

### 22. Respond to you within 10 working days when requested.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will acknowledge your correspondence within 10 working days when requested.</li> <li>• We endeavour to respond to all enquiries expeditiously.</li> </ul>	

<b>23. Publish regular updates on what we are doing to improve services as a result of views received.</b>	
<b>What we do now</b>	<b>What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We publish our Annual Local Policing Plan [?] together with the Police Authority report [?] and Local Policing Summaries [?].</li> <li>• We provide information about our service improvements through media articles.</li> <li>• We provide service updates to the public via Police Authority Meetings [?]</li> <li>• The Force conducts customer public satisfaction surveys [?]</li> <li>• We publish on our website, www.gwent.police.uk [?], appeals for information, meeting dates at ward level and agreed local priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are carrying out a fundamental review to ensure that the organisation is configured to deliver the best possible service to the people of Gwent with the resources available. The programme will also insure that support services are streamlined and designed to support the delivery of operational services to the public as effectively as possible. (Target date 2011)</li> </ul>

## VICTIMS OF CRIME

### 24. Identify and support vulnerable victims and children.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All our officers provide initial support to vulnerable victims and children before handing over to our specially trained staff.</li> <li>• We provide trained staff who specialise in supporting vulnerable victims of sexual offences, distraction burglary and incidents of domestic violence. Any special measures that may be required at court by vulnerable witnesses will be recorded in the witness assessment when a statement of evidence is taken. This will result in individual support being provided for vulnerable witnesses.</li> <li>• We have Family Liaison Officers who are trained to provide extensive support for the families of victims of serious crime or serious road traffic collisions.</li> <li>• The Force Witness Care Unit <a href="#">[?]</a> has developed processes in order to identify vulnerable and intimidated victims who attend Magistrate and Crown Courts.</li> <li>• We offer you pre-Court visits and familiarisation with video links if appropriate, prior to attending court to give evidence.</li> <li>• We actively refer the elderly, vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our communities to the Gwent Bobby Van Trust <a href="#">[?]</a> whom can attend your home and improve security by fitting various security devices and provide advice so as to reduce the fear of crime. Priority is given to Victims of Crime especially Burglary, Theft of Keys and Domestic Violence.</li> </ul>	

**25. Provide you with a victim of crime leaflet  
(and other relevant leaflets depending on the nature of your case).**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Victim of Crime leaflet is given to everyone who reports a crime [?].</li> <li>• We provide each victim with a leaflet outlining the Victim Personal Statement Scheme [?], which is fully explained by the officer and then insure that each victim will be given the opportunity to provide a Victim Personal Statement.</li> <li>• We have specialist staff that provide specific leaflets and information packages in child abuse cases.</li> <li>• We give you a unique crime reference number every time you report a crime.</li> </ul>	

**26. Unless you ask us not to do so, pass your details to Victim Support within two days.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We ensure officers ask victims of crime if they would like to be referred to Victim Support [?] for support and assistance.</li> <li>• We ensure Officers always ask for permission to refer your details to Victim Support [?] when your statement of evidence is recorded.</li> <li>• Our Crime Information System automatically generates your details, which are then supplied, with your permission, to Victim Support Co-ordinators [?] in line with national policy. (In those areas not covered by the automatic referral policy such as Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences we seek the victims permission before making any referral.)</li> </ul>	

**27. Keep you informed of the progress of the investigation, including arrest, caution, reprimand, warning, charge, release on bail and court proceedings.**

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The officer in your case notifies you as a priority if anyone is charged, cautioned, warned or reprimanded. If bail conditions are imposed you are also made aware.</li> <li>• The Force Witness Care Unit [?] is responsible for updating victims from the point of charge to the Court of Appeal.</li> <li>• Witness Care Officers [?] will contact you following a court hearing if there are any changes to custody status or bail conditions imposed.</li> <li>• If you are required to attend court as a witness, you will be asked to supply dates when you are not available. You will then be kept informed of ongoing progress of the case.</li> <li>• A Witness Care Officer [?] will contact you to assess any individual needs/arrangements you may require.</li> <li>• You will be notified of the court date and venue and supplied with details of the location and facilities available at court.</li> <li>• We can arrange a pre-court visit if required.</li> <li>• We have a new Crime Recording System that enhances our ability to manage your case and update you appropriately.</li> </ul>	

**28. Invoke 'special measures' where appropriate to assist you in giving evidence at court.**

<b>What we do now</b>	<b>What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have trained officers regarding special measures and the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime [?].</li><li>• When you supply a statement of evidence, a witness assessment form is completed by the officer, who records any special measures that are required. Special Measures [?] usually relate to young, vulnerable or intimidated witnesses.</li><li>• We arrange any special measures that you need in the event of you being required to attend court.</li></ul>	

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

### 29. Respond to any appropriate request for personal information within 40 calendar days (Data Protection Act).

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Data Protection Section deals with your requests within 40 days in line with legislation [?].</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are developing an Electronic Document Record Management System which will enhance the speed and efficiency at which documents can be identified and retrieved by our staff (Target date – 2010).</li> </ul>

### 30. Respond to any request for any other information within 20 working days (Freedom of Information Act).

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information can be gained on application by telephone (01495 745366), email (foi.gwent.pnn.police.uk) or by letter to the Freedom of Information Officer [?].</li> <li>Our Freedom of Information Officer deals with your request within 20 days in line with legislation [?].</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are developing an Electronic Document Record Management System which will enhance the speed and efficiency at which documents can be identified and retrieved by our staff (Target date – 2010).</li> </ul>

### 31. Ensure that any information on our website is accurate and kept under review.

What we do now	What we intend to do (including longer-term plans)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We continually update the Force Website (www.gwent.police.uk) [?] and review it to ensure relevant and accurate information is readily available.</li> <li>We publish daily media releases [?].</li> <li>We have a Freedom of Information page on our Internet Website [?] that provides up to date, relevant and accurate items of interest.</li> </ul>	

## COMPLAINTS

### 32. Complaints - Record, investigate and respond to you as appropriate.

#### What we do

- We have a formal procedure for handling all complaints regarding direction and control issues [?].
- We acknowledge your complaint by letter within 10 days
- We record all matters relating to direction and control on our Professional Standards Department [?] database.
- We notify you of our findings in detail by letter.

### 33. Complaints - Be as open and transparent, as the maintenance of effective policing will allow.

#### What we do

- We comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 [?].
- We notify you of our findings by letter in as much detail as we can.

### 34. Complaints - Set local standards for the timeliness of our response, the information to be supplied to you and the opportunity available to you to seek further information if you are not content with the initial response.

#### What we do

- We adhere to the guidelines for matters relating to direction and control that are set nationally by the Independent Police Complaints Commission [?].
- We respond to you correspondence within 10 days and notify you of who will be dealing with your complaint.
- We will advise you of which member of the organisation can assist you further if you are not content with our initial response.

### 35. Complaints - Use this information to inform the development of future local policy and practice.

#### What we do

- Our Professional Standards Department [?] provides quarterly feedback to staff using the result of complaints to improve quality and good practice.

**36. Complaints - Use this information to increase our understanding of how you wish to be treated.**

**What we do**

- We distribute the management information gained from our understanding and resolution of you complaints to each of our policing divisions, to better target their resources in line with Citizen Focused Policing [?].
- The Professional Standards Department [?] maintain an overview of all complaints and their resolution, to direct changes to Force policy where appropriate.

**37. Complaints - Whenever possible and with your agreement, attempt local resolution.**

**What we do**

- We empower and encourage our managers to make use of the local resolution system [?].

**38. Complaints - Investigate the complaint appropriately.**

**What we do**

- The Head of the Professional Standards Department maintains an overview of all complaints, and monitors investigations conducted, providing direction and guidance to ensure corporacy.

**39. Complaints - Adhere to the values and guidance of the Independent Police Complaints Commission.**

**What we do**

- We follow the guidance set by the Independent Police Complaints Commission [?] as to how we deal with Direction and Control complaints.
- The Independent Police Complaints Commission has an appeals process [?] that can be followed if you are not satisfied with the result of your complaint.

#### **40. Complaints - Demonstrate police accountability.**

##### **What we do**

- We provide an open and accessible complaint system under the guardianship of the Independent Police Complaints Commission [?].
- The Independent Police Complaints Commission [?] has the right to supervise, manage or independently investigate any investigations.
- The Police Authority Professional Standards Committee [?] monitor the work of our Professional Standards Department [?].

#### **41. Complaints - Operate to improve standards.**

##### **What we do**

- The Professional Standards Department [?] routinely feedback to managers and staff any lessons learned as a result of their investigations, in order to help improve standards and service delivery.
- The Professional Standards Department [?] publishes an internal newsletter on a quarterly basis, which provides feedback to staff on lessons learned as a result of their investigations, in order to help improve standards and service delivery.
- We refer any officer or member of police staff whose performance, as a result of a complaint investigation, is identified as being below standard, to the Learning and Development Department for further training.
- We have an Anti-Corruption Unit to provide a dedicated capacity to tackle corruption and improve professional standards.
- The Professional Standards Department [?] operates a 'mystery shopper' programme that can approach all of our Police Station enquiry desks.

#### **42. Complaints - Be responsive to the needs of the complainant.**

##### **What we do**

- The Professional Standards Department [?] agrees with the complainant to provide regular updates on the progress of the investigation.
- We provide you with details of the investigating officer's findings at the conclusion of each investigation.

### **43. Complaints - Be just and proportionate**

#### **What we do**

- Our investigating officers prepare an investigation strategy and terms of reference where appropriate to ensure a fair and proportionate investigation.
- Our investigations are always proportionate to the seriousness of the complaint.
- We always investigate complaints impartially.

### **44. Complaints - Be timely and effective.**

#### **What we do**

- We work towards the national standard of completing all investigations within 120 days.

### **45. Complaints - Be open to public scrutiny and sensitive to the public interest.**

#### **What we do**

- We explain to every complainant their right of appeal to the Independent Police Complaints Commission [?] for every complaint.
- The Police Authority Professional Standards Committee [?] act on behalf of the public to monitor complaints.
- The Independent Police Complaints Commission [?] review our investigated cases where required to do so.

### **46. Complaints - Increase public confidence in our ability to deal effectively with your concerns and complaints.**

#### **What we do**

- We continuously examine our lessons learned from complaints to identify further training needs and improvements.
- We share the commitment that the Independent Police Complaints Commission [?] attaches to tackling discriminatory behaviour in the police service.
- The Independent Police Complaints Commission [?] reports annually on our effectiveness in dealing with your complaints.

March 2008