

Gwent Police Estate Strategy

1. Introduction

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent (PCC) and the Chief Constable are committed to delivering effective policing services in the modern age, utilising new technology and up-to-date working practices to safeguard and reassure the public.

As the nature of policing is changing, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Gwent Police needs to be well placed to respond on a national as well as a local level, meeting the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan and responsibilities within the national Strategic Policing Requirement. In addition, in support of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, the sustainability of the estate will be a key success.

To support service delivery, the OPCC and Gwent Police require an estate that is fit for purpose. This strategy seeks to provide an assessment of the current estate against the policing and public requirements. It outlines the future vision for the estate and sets the objectives and direction for its future.

2. Vision for Policing

The National Policing Vision 2025 identifies six primary objective areas that police services must address to ensure that future requirements are met. These will drive the strategic direction of the service over this time period; Local Policing; Specialist Capabilities; Workforce; Digital Policing; Enabling Business Delivery; and Governance and Accountability.

The vision for policing in Gwent is to develop the right balance between provision and reassurance, which includes having a responsive police service, well located police stations and modern forms of communication and technology to ensure that officers are contactable and can provide an efficient, effective and economic service.

The Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan sets the priorities for Gwent Police and the Chief Constable manages resources to ensure delivery of services and response to all communities in Gwent. The priorities within the Police and Crime Plan are:

- a. Crime Prevention;
- b. Supporting Victims;
- c. Community Cohesion;
- d. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour; and
- e. Efficient and Effective Service Delivery.

A fit for purpose estate is critical to achieving these priorities and the Commissioner is committed to promoting police accessibility and visibility to ensure that uniformed presence is organised and deployed as effectively as possible.

In addition, the national Strategic Policing Requirement identifies new areas of crime that must be addressed alongside the Commissioner's priorities. Gwent Police, therefore, must be flexible, agile and adaptable to the changing nature and shape of service delivery.

Gwent Police's mission is **Protecting and Reassuring** local communities and the service has specified the essential values that need to be demonstrated to meet that purpose. These values are that the people within Gwent Police are Compassionate, Proud, Courageous, Positive and that they Keep Learning.

3. Vision for the Estate

The Police and Crime Commissioner's vision for the Estate is:

A future-focussed sustainable estate which reassures the public, motivates and enables officers and staff to deliver an excellent service with partners, whilst being financially viable.

a. Future Focussed

The estate must be fit for purpose for the next 20-25 years and accommodate the way in which policing will change to meet differing demands and policing tactics including a focus on cybercrime and the investigation of crime using technology.

b. Sustainable

The estate must deliver the principles of sustainable development enshrined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

c. Reassuring

We must recognise the important role that a physical police presence in communities plays in reassuring the members of those communities reflected in the Chief Constable's strategic aim to have engaged communities.

d. Motivating and Enabling

Officers and staff are our most important asset and we should provide them with a positive environment, physical space and the tools to do their job delivering the Chief Constable's strategic aim to promote the wellbeing of all officers and staff.

e. Excellence in Service Delivery

Gwent Police aspires to achieve excellence which is promoted by the Chief Constable's strategic aim to provide a service that strives to continuously improve.

f. Partners

Proactive working with partners underpins our 'One Public Service Ethos' and will enable us to manage demand, provide an improved service and also provide better outcomes for the public and communities.

g. Financially Viable

The aspiration of the vision for the estate must be grounded in the reality of the financial situation we face, the need to deliver Value for Money (VFM) and also the responsible stewardship of public funds.

4. Objectives of the Estate Strategy

The primary objectives of the strategy are to provide:

- a. An estate which provides a **citizen-focussed policing service**;
- b. An estate which supports **operational policing requirements**;
- c. An estate which demonstrates **value for money**; and
- d. An estate which is **designed for the future**.

In aspiring to achieve these objectives, the following secondary objectives will be considered in the development of business cases for change:

- a. An estate which provides a citizen-focussed policing service
 - i. Services meet the requirements of the public and communities;
 - ii. Services are accessible;
 - iii. Services present a positive corporate image; and
 - iv. Services are visible where the need is greatest.
- b. An estate which supports operational policing requirements
 - i. Services are positioned to meet demand and operational needs;
 - ii. 'One Public Service' is delivered through collaboration and co-location with partners;
 - iii. The welfare needs of officers and staff are met; and
 - iv. Officers and staff are supported to deliver an excellent public service.
- c. An estate which demonstrates value for money
 - i. Estate running costs are commensurate with the sector norm;
 - ii. The highest environmental standards are met;
 - iii. Space is optimised;
 - iv. All legislative requirements are met; and
 - v. Officers and staff are motivated by their surroundings.
- d. An estate which is designed for the future
 - i. Supports accessible and visible policing within our communities;
 - ii. Supports the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act;
 - iii. Support a sustainable environment; and
 - iv. Supports digital connectivity.

5. Strategy Development and Delivery

The Policing Vision 2025 and its principles, when described against the current estate provision, demonstrate the need for wider consideration of policing development.

The Estate Strategy provides the foundation for developing an estate that is fit for the future and adaptable to meet new challenges, meeting the demand for an effective public service that will be delivered in partnership at the heart of local communities.

Headquarters

Gwent Police require a headquarters facility which delivers corporate functions and central front line services, such as the control room, along with the support and management and training functions, that is fit for purpose and can support collaborative and interoperable services.

The new headquarters is in construction and will provide a facility of 5,000m² to accommodate corporate policing and support functions, replacing the current headquarters, which is 10,000m² and fifty years old.

Local Policing

The Local Policing provision comprises most of the existing estate and recognisable policing premises. Examining the local policing locations ensures that community need, as well as operational suitability, is at the forefront of estate decisions.

The model for Local Policing delivery therefore needs to reflect the demand, response and quality for service delivery to be maintained and improved. This will be achieved through the implementation of a Hub and Spoke estate model for Local Policing.

This model will introduce policing Hubs at key strategic road networks, enabling effective response to emergency and priority calls, tackling threat, harm and risk. The spoke element represents neighbourhood resources with suitable locations for engagement opportunities with communities.

Policing Hub

A Hub is a location where a large number of officers will be brought together to parade with bespoke facilities for their professional need whilst also supporting wellbeing. The Hubs will be operational bases and will not be the point of first contact for the public. They will not therefore need to be in city/town centre areas. However, there may be occasions when a member of the public is required to attend a Hub and this will be through a planned appointment.

These locations would contain flexible space from which resources would be deployed in close proximity to good road networks. Specialist elements of the police resource could also be based from these locations.

The Hubs need to be sized to accommodate the officer and staff numbers resourced for their respective communities. And will be operationally fit for purpose.

Digital technology already enables officers to parade at such locations and then operate in the field for the duration of their shift, without having to return. The policing teams utilise public and community locations during their shifts which increases visibility and improves engagement.

The following table presents the services that we plan to base at the Operational Hubs and the facilities that will be provided at these locations.

Operational / Patrolling Hubs

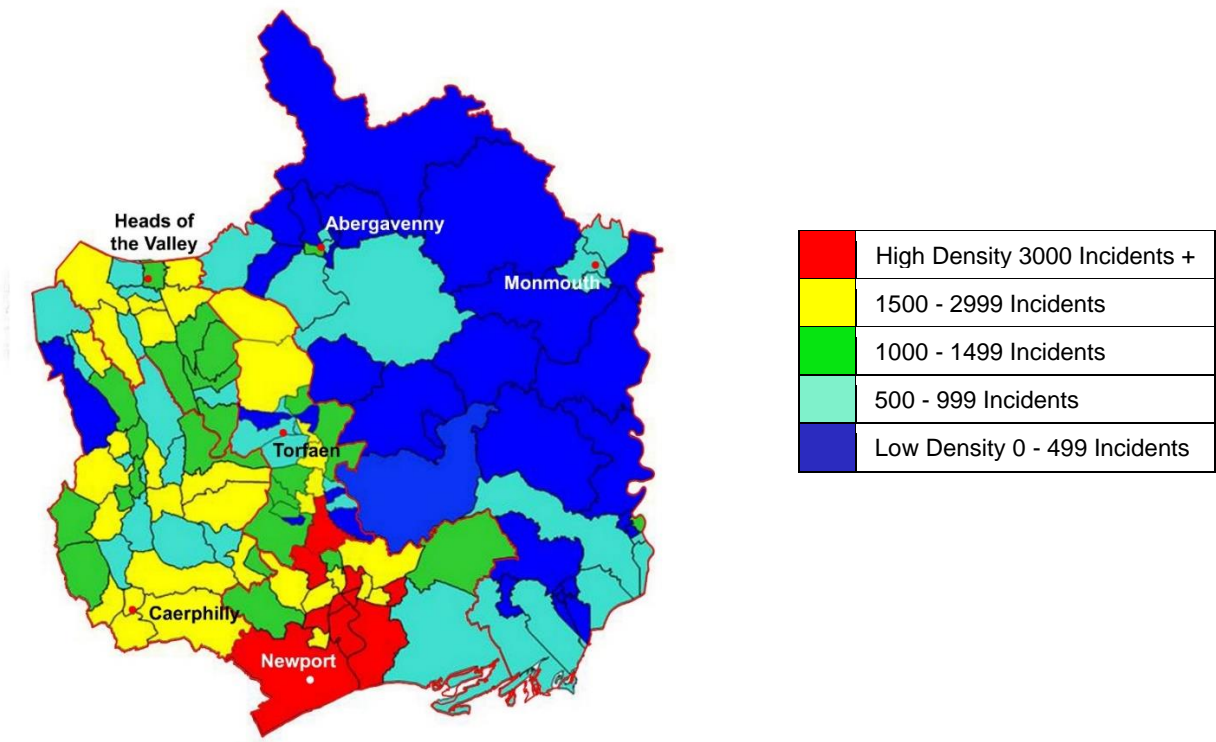
Services	Facilities
Management	Open Plan Working
Crime Investigation Department	Property Stores
Voluntary Attendance (for interviews with the public)	Kitchen
Response Teams	Lockers
Neighbourhood Teams	Showers
Police and Community Support Officers (PCSOs)	Gym
	Parking

The Hubs will facilitate the following functionality and resource for the force:

- The management structure to support delivery of the local policing model.
- The location of Hubs will enable officers to respond within agreed timeframes.
- The knowledge of community, it's geography, residents and issues.
- Developing teams to promote engagement.
- Wellbeing of officers and police staff.

Location of the Hubs

The location of the Hubs has been modelled taking account the current demand on police resources and road infrastructure to enable timely responses. The demand for service (measured by the number of incidents on an annual basis) is presented in the following map.



The locations of each Hub will need to be subject to a full business case which will confirm the operational, service and financial benefits. Each Hub will need to be fit for purpose. There will be active communication and engagement with communities and the public during the development of the business cases and full assessment of options.



Monmouthshire

The large geographical area and poor road networks, combined with the demand profile, has informed the need for two smaller Hubs to meet operational response times. In these smaller Hub locations consideration has been given to shared accommodation to enable economies of scale. Bases on the road network of Abergavenny and Monmouth towns would be preferred to enable good response times whilst also enabling the neighbourhood team to be in close proximity to access these locations.

Newport

The preference for Newport is a purpose built Hub on the outskirts to the East of the city. This will allow access to South Monmouthshire as well as allowing officers to access the motorway.

Blaenau Gwent

With the development of the Heads of the Valley road a Hub near Rassau would be the preferred location as it would provide support for the valleys south towards Caerphilly as well as offering support into Monmouthshire.

Caerphilly

Demand analysis suggests one Hub provided for the Caerphilly borough, with the North of the borough serviced by the Heads of the Valley Hub.

Torfaen

Torfaen is at the centre of the Gwent area from an operational perspective and it has fast roads to access all five local authority areas. It has also been identified as the preferable location for custody provision as well as providing a Hub for officers.

Spokes

Spokes are locations from which the police service is visible and accessible within local communities. The provision of Enquiry Office facilities provides the ability for the public to engage in face to face contact with police services, at identifiable police locations. The force has also developed new methods of contact, including digital services providing opportunities for self-service which enhance the opportunity for the police to engage with the public.

Critical to all of these locations, however, is the need to ensure that they have corporate identity and are known within communities as locations operated by Gwent Police.

Decisions regarding these locations will be made through assessment of local need with models for delivery including partner-owned locations, independent premises or collaborative premises with partners.

The strategy presents the base in the local community as being one of two categories:

Category 1 spoke is a building that could be solely police owned or be shared with partners. It would have published opening hours and would be staffed by a Station Enquiry Officer. The service will be supported by the neighbourhood PC and PCSO and it would be accessible to significant numbers of residents in the community.

Category 2 spoke is a building that could be police owned or could be shared with partners. It will operate as a space for officers to meet members of public during surgeries or on a planned basis. Officers and PCSO's will not be based at these locations but would visit on a regular basis. An example would be a community facility where officers have the ability to share a desk.

Spoke Locations

Category 1 - The PCC has committed that access to police services will remain in localities where demand for face to face contact remains evident, however, future provision may not necessarily be from existing premises and will require continuous review.

Category 2 – PCSOs and local Inspectors will be key to making recommendations in relation to category 2 provision. This will be determined on community engagement need and provided from community premises already used by partner agencies.

Assumptions

The modelling assumptions to be applied to all estate developments are aimed to improve the utilisation and efficiency of the facilities and improve the environmental footprint:

- A presumption for open plan as standard; design of any future office space should be

open plan, not cellular. Individual offices should not be allocated purely on rank or grade; and the need should be clearly identified by job function.

- An average 70% desking provision for designated team/departments has now been adopted and is being implemented – representing seven workstations for every 10 members of staff. This will vary based on the number of staff who are classified as fixed, flexible or field workers in their role.
- Operational shifts and other organisational functions will be assessed to ensure appropriate desk provision.
- Workstation space standard to be targeted between 5 – 6m²; including office locker storage.
- Greater use of off-site storage for records management and equipment, and the use of electronic/digital filing on the force network.
- The mainstreaming of Flexible and Agile working practices in line with Policy.

6. Current Assessment

The estate has developed over the last century in response to the policing demands of the time, and properties do not necessarily match current or future requirements. The majority of police stations and offices pre-date modern technology, partnership working models and environmental factors, such as carbon management plans. Whilst changes in policing structures and demand has been constant, the pace has increased and although some of the estate is still well placed to meet current demand much of it is not. Some buildings fail to meet expected standards, many lack the flexibility expected of modern workplaces, and some are disproportionately expensive to occupy and maintain.

The police estate, at the time of writing this strategy, can be characterised as follows:

- a. There are 51 assets that fall into the category of owned, leasehold and leased/licence.
- b. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) owns, under freehold (34) and leasehold (3) arrangements, a total of 36 properties. A further 15 properties/spaces within properties are leased or licensed. Therefore, 70% of properties are owned.
- c. The estate ranges from Victorian buildings to relatively new premises. Some 80% of properties pre-date the 1980s and just 20% are less than 20 years old.
- d. The most recent condition profile of the overall estate highlights that just over 70% of the properties surveyed are in good or reasonable condition. This suggests that whilst the Commissioner retains a reasonably well managed estate, there are opportunities to improve and modernise through refurbishing or replacing parts of the portfolio.
- e. The larger properties in the estate account for a significant proportion of overall space and cost. Some of the largest properties are disproportionate to the number of officers

and staff they house and therefore demonstrate a high running cost per capita/head count.

- f. The Victorian premises, which are located throughout Gwent, have several similarities in design and construction. They can be considered to have been designed in line with policing delivery at the time of build (many accommodate decommissioned custody cells) and retained as stations recognisable within communities in Gwent. Some have been established within or adjacent to residential premises and each is generally of solid wall construction, with a collection of small rooms. They are relatively high cost to maintain and not situated with a view to modern transport requirements.
- g. Premises falling into a category relating to construction within the 1960's and 1970's suffer with poor insulation and associated heating implications. They are also comprised of smaller designated spaces and incur higher maintenance costs for the organisation.
- h. The most recently built premises are better insulated and located near to road links, however, building construction does limit the flexibility within each building. Ystrad Mynach and Newport Central, in particular, are limited to change of construction due to the custody provision in each.
- i. The Commissioner has a number of lease agreements on premises within the Mamhilad Park Estate which houses a specialist crime function, a partnership team and also operational training. The Commissioner also has lease agreements on premises at the Vantage Point complex in Cwmbran which houses the Learning and Development department, Human Resources (HR), Finance and Payroll. The space is provided on a predominantly open plan basis to facilitate agile working, with designated meeting/training space.
- j. Occupational Health is currently located within a semi-detached former police house in Llantarnam, which is independent from other support departments. The Commissioner also owns a welfare chalet in Pembrokeshire, used to support officers and staff as a health and wellbeing retreat.
- k. Collaborative Arrangements

- i. *101 House*

This is a collaborative emergency centre supported through funding from Welsh Government and situated on the border between Gwent and South Wales Police. The space is shared with South Wales Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Welsh Ambulance Service Trust.

- ii. *Joint Scientific Investigation Unit*

Located at South Wales Police Headquarters, this two-force collaboration provides in-house forensic services and has UKAS accreditation.

iii. Joint Firearms Unit

This tri-service collaboration provides the specialist firearms provision for Dyfed Powys, Gwent and South Wales. The Unit covering the Gwent area is located at Rumney Police Station, Cardiff, with the training delivered from Bridgend.

iv. Abertillery Joint Emergency Service Station

A collaborative emergency services station that sees the building used as a permanent base for Gwent Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue and the Wales Ambulance Service Trust.

7. Approach to Implementation

The future strategy and proposals seek to optimise the balance between retaining, improving and replacing both operational and support premises.

The fundamental principle within the strategy is that the force will improve visibility in communities to achieve the Commissioner's vision for the estate:

A future-focussed sustainable estate which reassures the public, motivates and enables officers and staff to deliver an excellent service with partners, whilst being financially viable.

A key element will be the development of business cases which demonstrate the best approach to policing a geographic area, supported by robust evidence for the preferred option applied to each property. The appraisal will include benefits assessment and be sequenced, taking into consideration the size and geographical spread of the property portfolio, the extent of possible change, existing opportunities for collaboration as well as the resource and capacity to meet demand.

This will mean implementing a strategy that will:

- *Retain* and more effectively occupy accommodation and sites where properties are well located, in good condition and support strategy.
- *Redevelop or refurbish* properties to improve those that are located in strategic locations, with potential to accommodate future requirements which are currently in poor condition.
- *Replace* property not in the right location, or properties in poor condition that cannot provide for future needs. Service provision will be enhanced through investment in better located accommodation, which could mean:
 - acquiring new accommodation, either new leasehold property or a new freehold build, or acquisition,

- enhanced collaboration and co-location with partners in shared facilities.
- *Recycle* the estate in the spirit of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015; working with communities, voluntary and third sector organisations to enable property to be used by relevant groups; or transfer ownership to support local improvements, initiatives and social enterprises.
- *Regenerate* in collaboration with partner agencies, seek opportunities to support local development in areas of deprivation where this may be appropriate (e.g. ongoing local regeneration initiatives).

The proposed models have been applied to a number of example areas to allow illustrative options to be developed. These options reflect the functional requirements and meet the established strategic parameters. They describe a range of opportunities including increased collaboration and co-location which provides greater challenge to the status quo and the application of more ambitious space standards.

The process indicates the extent of benefit which will be achieved, but each example would require further development by means of a business case to establish which level of ambition is most appropriate.

The range of options will be influenced by a number of factors including, but not limited to:

- Pace of change of enablers (Digital Programme, HR reform, Delivery Plan).
- Available funding (from existing budget, capital receipts and borrowing).
- Partnering and space sharing opportunities.

This Estate Strategy will require triennial review to reflect development and change.

8. Sustainability

The estate must be environmentally friendly to ensure sustainability for future generations. The implementation of the strategy will recognise building standards to achieve the standards of the UK Committee on Climate Change (UKCCC) and the ambition for the Welsh Public Sector to be carbon neutral by 2030.

This will be achieved through initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of our premises such as improvements to our current building condition and new constructions that meet BREEAM rating.

9. Financial Implications

More effective use of accommodation may result in Gwent Police being located in fewer premises but delivering a more accessible and visible service to the public. The current estate has an annual running costs are £4.2m.

Headquarters

The cost of the new headquarters is a capital cost of £32m and an annual revenue cost of £500,000. These costs are supported by an approved business case with a commissioning date of October 2021.

Hubs

The cost of the Hub will be dependent on the number of officers that will be based from each location and will be influenced by whether it is new build, utilisation of a current police premise or collaborative premise.

Spokes

The cost of the six potential spokes have been estimated determined on category 1 and 2 models for which individual needs assessments will inform the type of provision:

The Category 1 spoke is expected to cost a capital sum of circa £25,000 and annual running cost of £3,000.

The Category 2 spoke in each location will cost a nominal contribution to a partner organisation.

These costs are fluid and therefore potential overall costs of the spokes have not been included in the financial plan for the Estate Strategy.

Total

The total capital cost of this strategy will be reflected through the four year Medium Term Financial Plan which is updated annually as part of the budget setting process to provide an accurate reflection of planned costs in delivering the strategy.

Affordability

The financing of the Estate Programme will be sourced from both reserves and public sector loans. The funding of loans will be financed through the revenue savings achieved through the rationalisation of the estate and the lower running costs of new buildings compared to the current estate.

The capital programme is provided in the Medium Term Financial Plan and confirms planned capital expenditure to deliver the strategy.

The financing for each development will be considered in the individual business cases to ensure the financial strategy is sustainable.

10. Delivery Timeline for Estate Review and Implementation

Delivery of the Estate Strategy will be planned and implemented as a programme over a fifteen year period.

An outline implementation plan has been developed based on service priorities.

Current	Headquarters 2019 - 2021	HQ and other Corporate Buildings
Phase 1	Monmouthshire North 2017 - 2022	Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk
Phase 2	Torfaen 2019-2025	Blaenavon, Cwmbran, Garndiffaith, Pontypool, Trevechin
Phase 3	Heads of the Valley 2024-2028	Abertillery Fire Station, Blaina, Brynmawr, Ebbw Vale, Rhymney, Tredegar, Tredegar Stores
Phase 4	Caerphilly 2027 - 2031	Bargoed, Bedwas, Blackwood, New Tredegar, Risca, Ystrad Mynach
Phase 5	Newport (New M4) 2030 – 2034	Alway, Bettws, Caerleon, Caldicot, Chepstow, Magor, Maindee, Newport, Pill, Rogerstone

The headquarters development is progressing with the building being commissioned by the end of 2021.

Phase 1 of the strategy is being progressed with the design of the new Abergavenny police station.

In turn, the Category 1 spoke has been established in Abergavenny Town Hall in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council.

A programme approach will be adopted to meet organisational needs and re-shape the estate. The review of the strategy will provide the opportunity to review the prioritisation to ensure the strategy has flexibility through implementation to react to opportunities as they arise. Appropriate resources will be directed to deliver the individual projects in line with recognised project management methodology.

11. Communication Strategy – Internal and External

The Engagement and Communication Strategy has been developed to ensure effective communication and engagement at each stage of the estate programme with key stakeholders. The stakeholders will include elected representatives, communities and members of the public as well as Police Officers and staff.

12. Conclusion

The Estate Strategy highlights that the nature of the current police estate is both significant and diverse and that the potential opportunities arising from the implementation of the strategy are considerable.

It provides an opportunity to consolidate the footprint occupied by Gwent Police and rationalise the assets held without compromising on visibility and accessibility to communities. The intention of the strategy is to ensure that services are delivered consistently whilst having flexibility to evolve to meet emerging and future changes.

Collaboration at a local and regional level is integral to the strategy and builds on the vision of a modern, demand led and collaborative model of policing that is fit for the future.

In conclusion, the Estate Strategy provides the foundation for developing an estate that is fit for the future and adaptable to meet new challenges, meeting the demand for an effective public service that will be delivered in partnership at the heart of local communities.