



Hertfordshire remains one of the safest counties in England

Crime continued to fall in the county in 2009/10 and Hertfordshire ended the year with crime at its lowest level for the last eight years. Collaboration with other forces and an increasing use of technology such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) is proving successful in the fight against crime in Hertfordshire.

Indicator CR1 – Recorded Crime

The county remains one of the safest in England. The number of crimes reduced by over 8%, equating to more than 6,000 fewer victims. Home burglary, robbery and motor vehicle crime all fell.

Hertfordshire Constabulary has also improved its detection rate with over 35% of crimes being detected and the perpetrator being charged, cautioned or receiving some other form of sanction for their criminal activities.

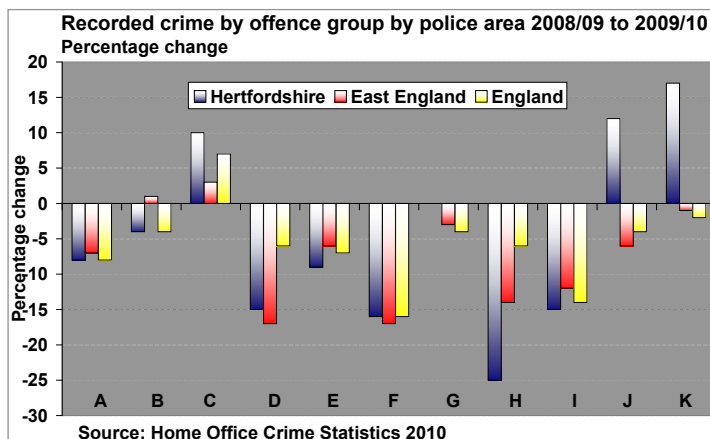
Indicator CR1 - Recorded Crime			
Crime Type	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Total Numbers of Crime	80,239	76,152	70,001
Sanction Detection Rate	29.6%	32.9%	35.3%
Home Burglaries	4,538	4,969	4,347
Serious Violent Crimes	361	357	364
Robberies	758	759	645
Vehicle Crimes	10,726	9,596	8,155

Source: Hertfordshire Constabulary

Home Office Statistics

Crime statistics are collected, analysed and published by the Home Office annually to reflect the financial year. This data can be used to compare and contrast crime trends across England and Wales.

The following graph displays the percentage change in reported crimes between 2008/09 and 2009/10, in Hertfordshire, East of England and England. The crimes have been grouped into categories which best reflect the incident.



A	Total	G	Other theft offences
B	Violence against person	H	Fraud and forgery
C	Sexual offences	I	Criminal damage
D	Robbery	J	Drug offences
E	Burglary	K	Other offences
F	Offence against vehicle		

Whilst Hertfordshire saw a percentage increase in sexual offences, reversing a declining trend of previous years, in real terms this equates to an increase of forty offences and Hertfordshire remains a county with one of the lowest levels of offences in the country.

The increase in drug offences reflects the Constabulary's proactive approach in targeting drug dealers.

Amongst the biggest declining trends for Hertfordshire are fraud, robbery and criminal damage cases. Fraud cases in Hertfordshire have fallen by 25% in a year, almost double the percentage change of the East of England and over five times the decrease made in England overall.

Knife Crime

Total offences involving a knife recorded by police – 2008/09 and 2009/10 percentage change			
Region	2008/09	2009/10	Percentage change
Hertfordshire	177	128	-27.68%
East of England	2,097	1,936	-7.68%
London	12,259	12,570	2.54%
England	34,806	32,570	-6.42%

Source: Home Office Crime Statistics 2010

The table above highlights a considerable decrease in knife crime in Hertfordshire (almost a 28% reduction).



This can be compared to the average of the East region, which is also displaying a decrease in knife associated crime, but not as significant a change as Hertfordshire. Knife crime in London continues to rise with over a third of all knife crime in England occurring here. It had the equivalent of 34 knife related incidents a day in the capital, in 2009/10. Despite the continued rise in knife related crime in London, the overall offences involving a knife recorded by police in England have fallen at a similar rate to that of the East region (approximately 7%).

Command Changes

On 1 April 2010 Hertfordshire Constabulary launched its Local Policing Command (LPC), providing a more efficient and effective way to oversee the delivery of local policing services across the county.

The LPC replaced the previous three area commands, which reduced duplication and complexity in how frontline officers and staff are managed and supported. Victims of crime and members of the public who make contact with the police should not notice the changes which have been made to protect community policing and crime investigation at every level.

The County Headquarters in Welwyn Garden City provides a support and administrative function for the Constabulary and is the base for Chief Constable Frank Whiteley and his executive team.

More locally based Neighbourhood Teams work in local partnerships at ward district and borough council level.

Police Numbers

Round the clock approximately 4,000 police officers and police staff work hard to provide a policing service to the public of Hertfordshire, supported by more than 350 Special Constables.

The Constabulary polices an area of 632 square miles, with a population of well over a million. The mix of villages and towns, with some of the busiest roads in Europe, place a variety of demands on the police. The county's landscape is also diverse ranging from the urban borders of London to large rural areas.

In October 2009, the Special Constabulary launched the deployment of their Rural Special Constables. Throughout 2010 this area of the police force has developed with a focus on reaching out to the rural community to create safer communities in the vast countryside of Hertfordshire. These specialist roles are filled by voluntary officers who use their own method of transport (including horses) to patrol their area of rural Hertfordshire.

Collaboration

Working with other police forces can bring enormous benefits, such as increased resilience and economies of scale. Hertfordshire Constabulary is continuing to develop opportunities to collaborate effectively with Bedfordshire and other forces and partners, and has already seen many successes.

In the context of the significant financial challenges that the Constabulary is currently facing, collaborative working is seen as a key option to achieving savings. A dedicated joint programme team continues to explore opportunities for further collaborative work.

Use of Technology

The Hertfordshire Constabulary polices some of the busiest roads in Europe. The Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology plays an important part in helping to deliver this modern service, under the force's campaign 'Operation Sentinel', which includes not only the two Intercept teams but every application of ANPR across the county.

Far from being just a specialist tool for a specialist unit, this technology is now embedded into Hertfordshire's daily policing. With Armed Response Vehicles, Road Policing vehicles and many Intervention and Neighbourhood vehicles equipped with ANPR, as well as static and re-deployable cameras providing a network across the county.

Launched in June 2009, and in operation day and night, the two dedicated ANPR teams are now out covering the county on a daily basis, the Intercept teams have made a big impact. At the last check, they had arrested over 1,100 individuals and taken over 1,600 unsafe, illegal vehicles off the road.



Source: Hertfordshire Constabulary

Hertfordshire Police Officers checking vehicles using the ANPR technology