



Devon & Cornwall Police

Building safer communities together

Police Enquiry Office Closures Police and Crime Panel

17th October 2014

Police Enquiry Office Review

Introduction

- In 2010/11 a Review into Station Enquiry Offices was undertaken and as a result the number of front offices reduced from 57 to the current number of 21. Exeter, Charles Cross (Plymouth) and Torquay are known as the three 'larger enquiry offices' due to their footfall and demand
- The Review professionalised the service, provided bespoke training, a centralised management structure and corporate opening times meaning the enquiry offices were always open when advertised to be so
- It also introduced corporate branding of enquiry offices and alternatives for accessibility. It renamed the Station Enquiry Officer role as 'Police Enquiry Officers' (PEOs)
- Recent indications have been that enquiry offices are not being used as much in 2013/2014 due to technological advances and increase in smart-phone and email usage
- In 2014, due to the revised Comprehensive Spending Review, a further review of enquiry office provision was commissioned. Key stakeholders were written to in March, and again in May, to inform them and seek feedback
- This document provides the evidence base for the decision made by the Chief Constable and supported by the PCC to close 12 of the 21 remaining enquiry offices on 31st October 2014



Financial Context

Police Staff

Police Staff numbers have reduced by 551 since 2009. This represents 25% of total police staff and came in addition to the recycling of 145 posts in 2008/9 which were used to release 200 police officers to front line duties. Further reductions of 90 police staff are planned over the next 2 years, taking the total reduction to 29%. The table below shows total staff reductions made between 2009/10 and 2013/14. These posts were released as a mixture of design reviews to improve service delivery, vacancy reviews, and value for money challenges.

Posts	Service Reviews :	VFM Scrutiny	Vacancy management	Grand Total
Human Resources/Finance/Admin	166	4	4	174
PEO	89			89
Civilian Investigators	82			82
Crime & Justice	30	20	16	66
Divisional staff		41		41
Corporate Comms	16	1	2	19
ICT	17	2		19
Call Handling	11	5	1	17
Operations	9	2	2	13
Performance & Analysis	12	1		13
Business Change	5		1	6
PSD	1	3	1	5
Territorial Policing Department		3	1	4
Diversity			2	2
COG Support		2		2
Grand Total	437	84	30	551



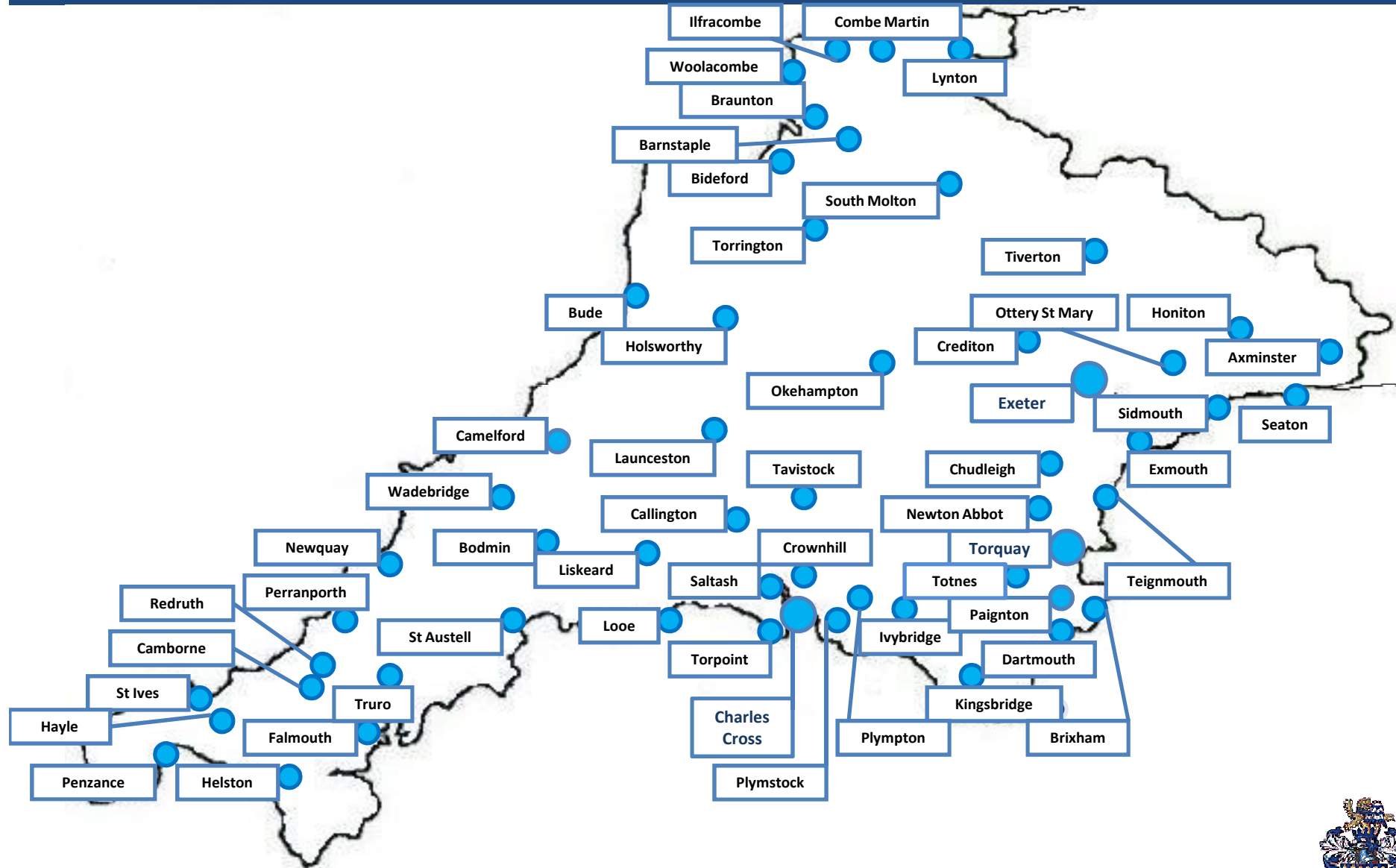
Financial Context

The second Comprehensive Spending Review brings further financial challenges for policing. Devon and Cornwall Police are required to find an additional £14,800,000 by 31st March 2019. It is envisaged there will be further cuts required post 2019. 81% of the force's budget is spent on police officer, PCSO and police staff salaries.

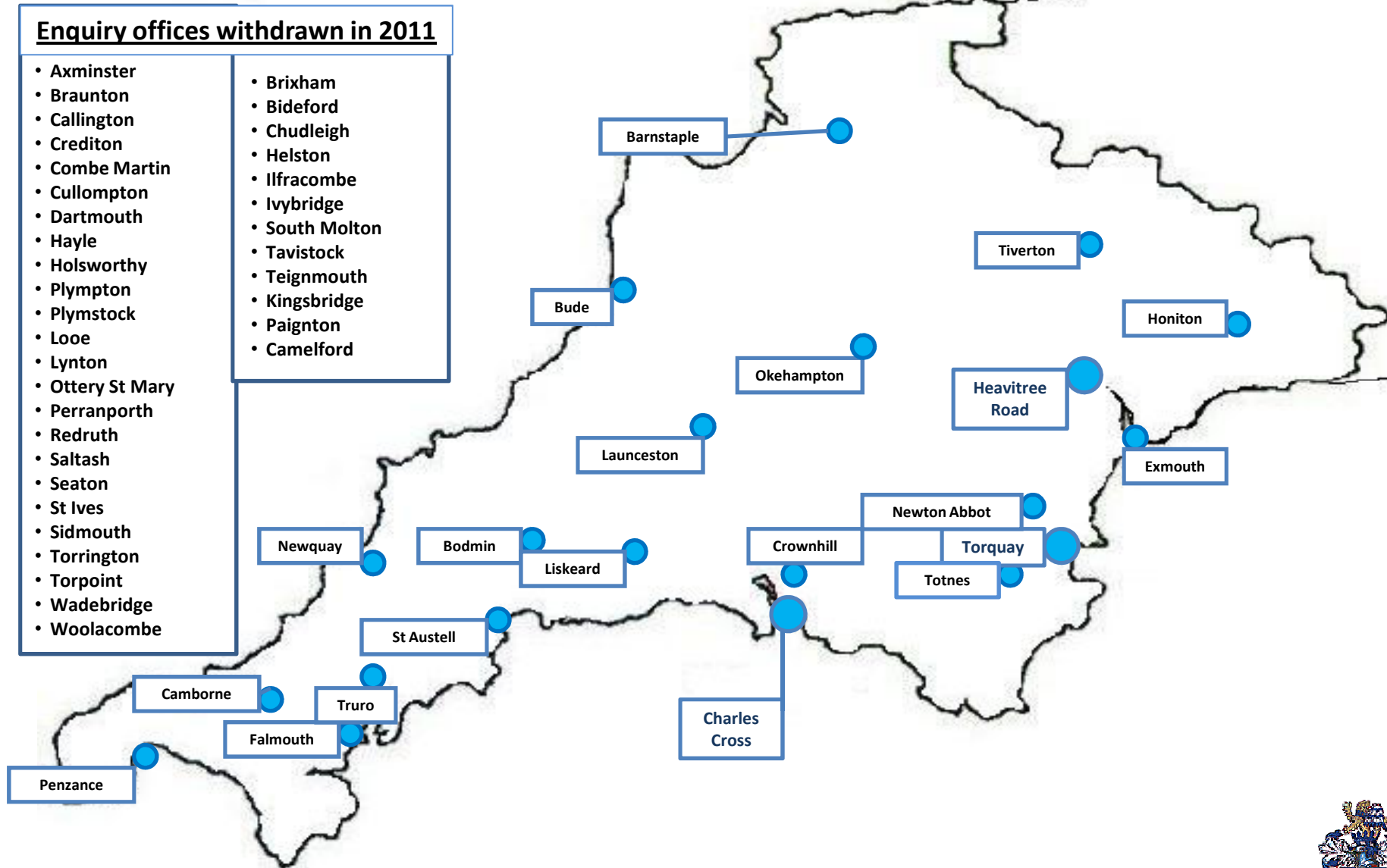
2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018/19
£1.2	-£6.6	-£12.9	-£14.8



57 x Police Enquiry Offices in 2010



21 x Police Enquiry Offices remained following the 2010/11 Review



9 x Police Enquiry Offices after
31/10/14



Savings to be Realised from Police Enquiry Office Review - 2014

Enquiry Office Locations

Enquiry Offices remaining

Charles Cross 5 x staff
Torquay 5 x staff
Exeter 5 x staff
Barnstaple 3 x staff
Crownhill 2 x staff
Camborne 2 x staff
Bodmin 2 x staff
St Austell 2 x staff
Truro 2 x staff

Supervisors 3 x staff
Total Staffing = 31.0

Costs per Year

Charles Cross £112,825
Torquay £112,825
Exeter £112,825
Barnstaple £67,695
Crownhill £45,130
Camborne £45,130
St Austell £45,130
Bodmin £45,130
Truro £45,130

Sub Total £631,820
Supervisors £72,857

Grand Total £755,915

Evidence

Feedback from Police Enquiry Officer consultation groups informed the review team that with a new shift pattern the 3 larger stations' enquiry offices can reduce by x 3 staff in each location.

The smaller retained stations' enquiry offices will retain their current staffing, albeit with a change to their shift pattern. The opening hours will reflect a revised shift pattern to provide opening times of 0800-1800 Monday to Friday at the larger stations' enquiry offices and 0900-1700 or 09.30-17.30 at smaller stations' enquiry offices.

Staff will no longer be required to work weekends or incur anti-social hours allowances. Supervision of staff will be the responsibility of three first line supervisors, a reduction of 1 from the current position.

Pros:

- Generates savings towards the overall Force required savings
- All bar one enquiry office aligned to Custody Centres
- All bar one enquiry office aligned to Magistrates Courts
- Supervision ratio sufficient
- Even spread of enquiry offices across the most populated areas of the force, near arterial routes

Cons:

- Reduction in opening hours will impact on public accessibility
- Less resilience in the larger enquiry offices, though offset by change in opening hours
- Public perception of police withdrawing from communities

Impact

- Reduction in opening hours at larger station's enquiry offices
- Financial implications for staff in loss of shift allowance/weekend enhancement
- The footfall justifies Barnstaple remaining at 3 staff. For resilience it justifies remaining at 3 staff as it is too far from other enquiry offices for achievable mobility of other staff

Opportunity

Annual Savings

Reduction in current staffing from 60.97 to 31 (including supervisors)

Reduction in staff costs from £1,566,815 to £755,915

Annual saving: **£810,900**



Police Enquiry Office Review

Footfall Surveys 2010 and 2014 - Introduction

Overview of Footfall

In 2010 footfall data was collected over two weeks and formed part of the iteration process to identify which enquiry offices should remain open and which should close

In 2014 a further footfall exercise was undertaken over a two week (14 day) period

A worry about footfall displacement expressed in 2010/11 has never come to fruition. Indeed website hits have increased, and reasons to attend a police front counter in person has decreased (eg: driving document production is no longer required, as it is now electronic, and that alone formed 18% of footfall in 2010). The evidence is presented further on in the document

Evidence

Footfall surveys were carried out between 10th March 2014 and 23rd March 2014 to ascertain where the busiest enquiry offices were and at what times. The survey recorded ALL footfall, though for the decision making on this review only the footfall for police related matters that are auditable has been considered (e.g: crime reporting, lost/found property, sex offender registration, bail sign-on, incident reporting, Road Traffic Collision reporting). The decision making did not include giving directions, signposting to another agency, reception duties or other duties not part of the front office staff's role profile, though those demands were captured in the overall footfall statistics

All front offices have local maps on the wall outside the stations and a 'blue wallphone'

The final agreed opening hours from the public consultation in 2010 were implemented but a post implementation review in late 2011 showed that at evenings and weekends the offices were extremely quiet. This has remained the case in 2012/13. In addition the public and staff would prefer a Monday opening at the smaller front offices. This was not introduced in 2010 as there was a requirement for 'rest days' to be 2 x sequential (Sunday and Monday), but has been introduced as part of the 2014 review

Impact

The closure of over half of the force enquiry offices in 2011 appeared to have no negative impact on public confidence and satisfaction

Potential opportunity

- To make a substantial reduction in published opening hours would equate to a reduction in police enquiry staff numbers
- Reducing opening hours to provide the service only at the busiest times will negate the need for anti-social hours/shift allowance and weekend enhancement. This currently equates to £175,000 per annum and will significantly decrease under the new arrangements



Police Enquiry Office Review

Enquiry Office Footfall 2014 – by Weekday and Weekend

Overview of Footfall Data

This table shows that there is significantly more demand during the weekdays

* Honiton, Totnes and Newton Abbot are not included as the confidence factor in their data was too low. However, in 2010 their daily footfall was:
 Newton Abbot – 28
 Totnes – 24
 Honiton – 36

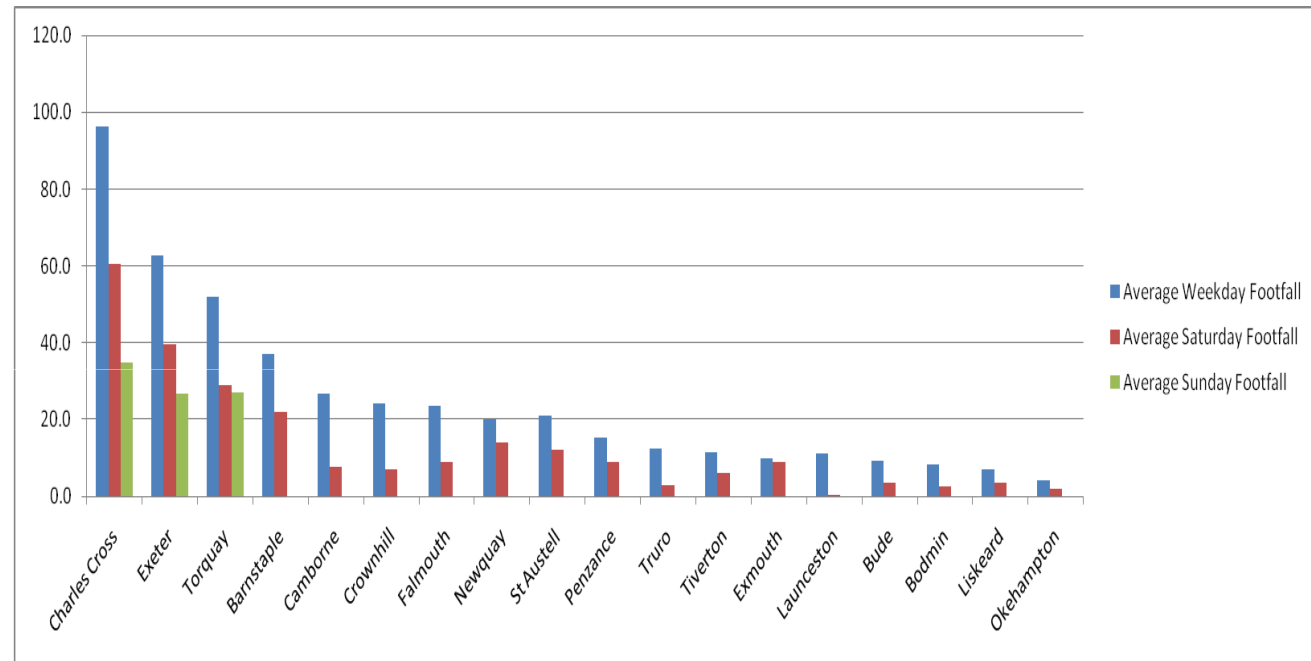
But we know from comparing 2010 and 2014 data that daily footfall has dropped significantly eg:

2010

Charles Cross – 112
 Exeter – 95
 Torquay – 86
 Barnstaple - 50

2014

Charles Cross – 96
 Exeter – 62
 Torquay – 52
 Barnstaple - 38



This graph demonstrates that the lowest average Saturday footfall of the three largest front office (Torquay) is still significantly busier than all but one of smaller stations average weekday footfall. This indicates that there is little justification for providing weekend opening at smaller front offices when weekend working is the least cost effective option and demand is at its lowest.



Police Enquiry Office Review

Footfall Data per Hour - 2014

Overview of Footfall Data

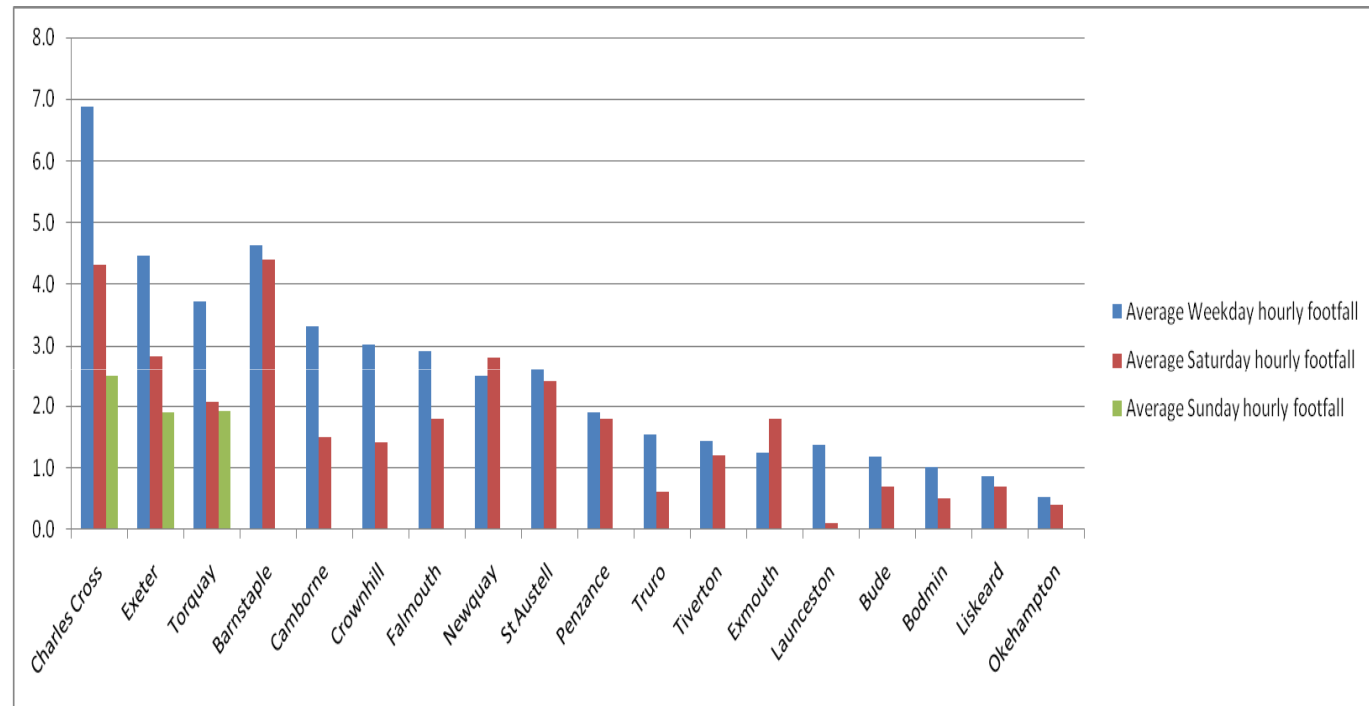
This table shows the average **hourly** footfall demand per station per weekday/weekend

*Honiton, Totnes and Newton Abbot data is not included as the confidence factor in their data was too low. In 2010 their data was:

Newton Abbot – 4 per hour
 Totnes – 3 per hour
 Honiton – 4 per hour

However we know that footfall has reduced across all sites between 15% and 40% since 2010

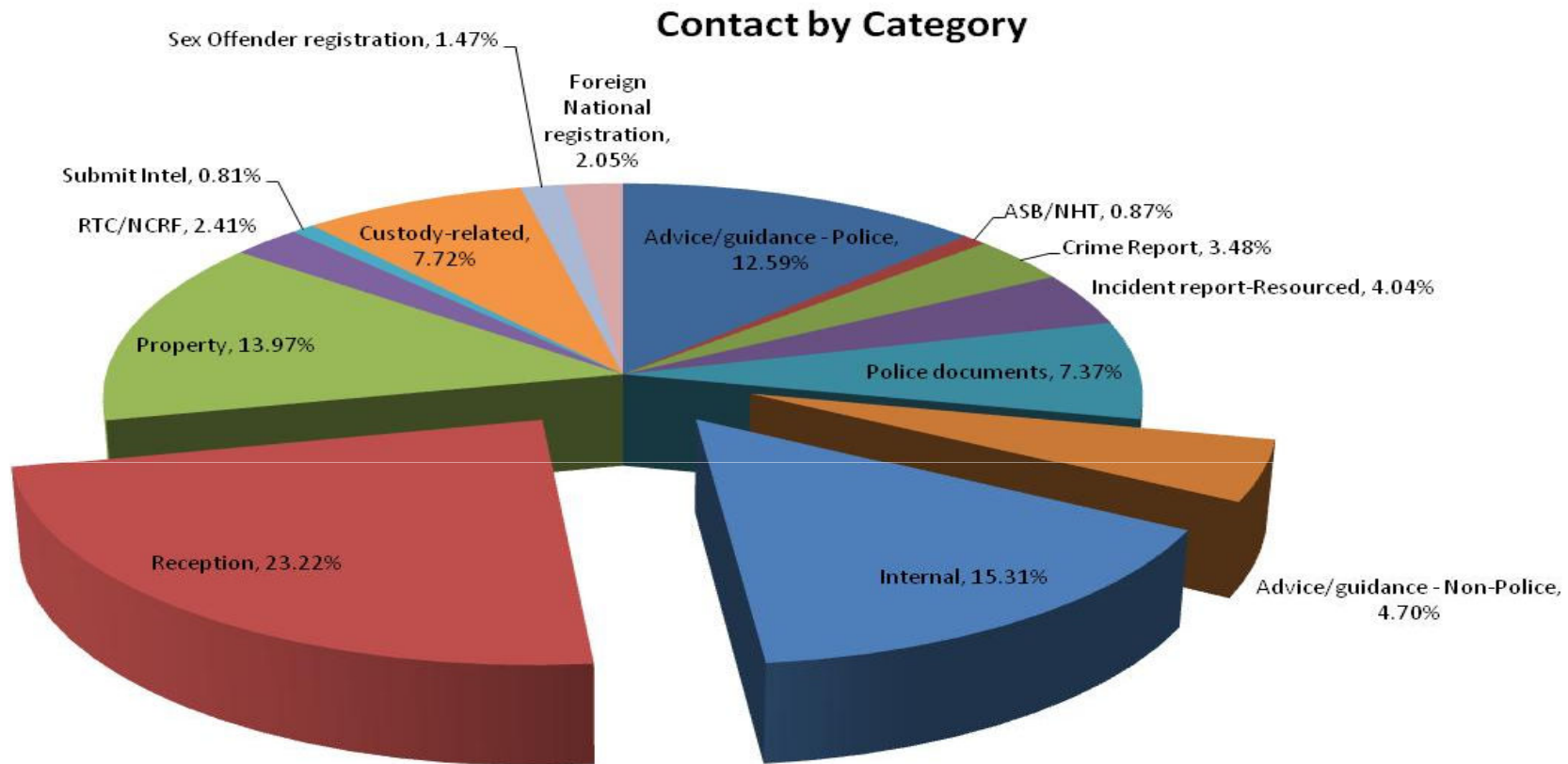
9 of the 18 sites who recorded data have less than 2 visitors per hour, on average



This graph shows that although some enquiry offices such as Barnstaple, Newquay and St Austell have a similar average hourly footfall at weekends, all the smaller offices are only open for 5 hours on Saturday compared to 14 hours between 0800-2200hrs at the larger offices stations, therefore the demand is condensed into shorter hours, but the overall demand is still significantly lower.



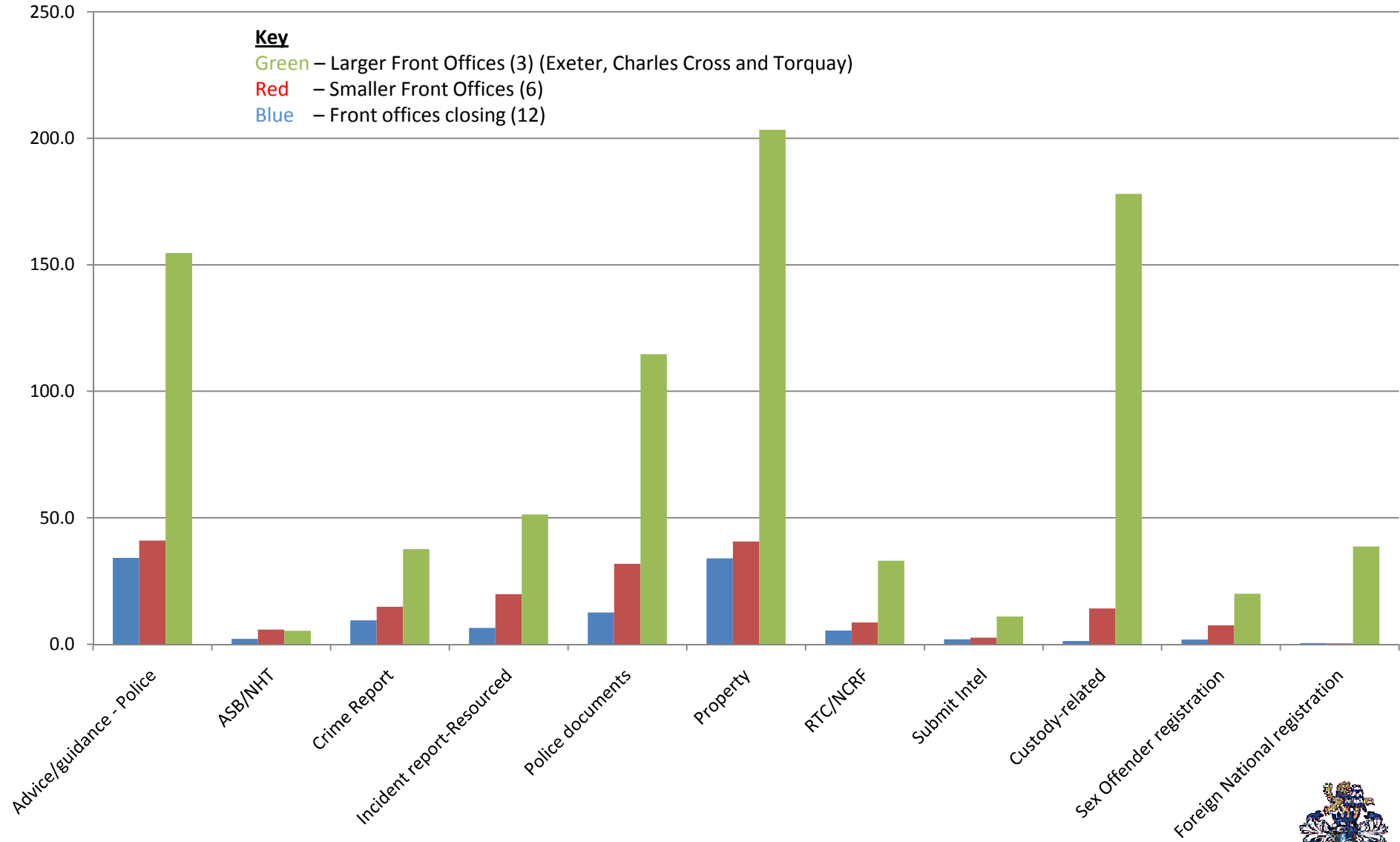
Police Enquiry Office Workload by Category – March 2014



KEY: RTC – Road Traffic Collision
NCRF – National Collision Recording Form
ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour
NHT – Neighbourhood Team related enquiry



Activity Analysis - 2014 (Average number of visitors per week)



Police Enquiry Office Review – Key Factors considered

Community Impact Considerations

The level of public footfall is one key indicator of whether the retention of an enquiry office can be justified in the present economic climate but was not be considered in isolation.

A process was used to assess the viability of each enquiry office, and the impact withdrawing the service would have on the community and any potential increase in workload for neighbouring enquiry offices. The 2010 review expected displacement of demand to those offices that remained open, but surprisingly this has not occurred. This is due to improvements in accessibility via other means such as technology, social media and less legal requirements to visit a front office in person (eg: production of documents).

The review considered 7 issues: footfall, population, location, operational health check (Buildings), Custody Centres, Courts, tourism/seasonality . A degree of professional judgement was applied in conjunction with Local Policing Commanders that included such issues as local politics, deprivation indices, arterial routes and future removal and availability of other agencies accommodation.

Each neighbourhood and local policing area has revised its 'community engagement plans' in preparation for the front office closures



Result considered. Professional judgement applied to determine cut off point



De-selection of those enquiry offices that fell below cut off point



Police Enquiry Office Review

Public Consultation around Opening Hours

Overview of Opening Hours

The demographics of the force area and the population have not altered in any statistically significant way since the extensive public surveys were completed in 2010.

It is therefore perfectly reasonable to assume that the findings will not have changed in any statistically significant way

MPs, Chief Executives, partners and other key stakeholders have been written to twice regarding the 2014 review and observations and responses have been invited (see next page for information).

Having altered the opening times in 2011 to include more Saturday opening (from 47% to 100%) to reflect people's expressed desire, the actual footfall on a Saturday has been proved not to justify the additional cost in weekend enhancement, other than in the 3 larger stations (Exeter, Torquay and Charles Cross.)

Evidence

Between 1st March and 31st May 2010, 4,080 people were surveyed from the following groups across the force area:

- 2,405 customers attending the front counter
 - 441 members of staff and officers within Devon and Cornwall Police, who responded as a member of public
 - 1,107 people asked by their local Neighbourhood Beat Manager (NBM)/Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)
 - 127 Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) members
- They were asked to provide their preferences on access to police services. This included stating:
- What time of day they are most likely to want access, results as shown in **Fig 2**
 - If weekdays or weekends would be most suitable for them, results as shown in **Fig 3**

Fig 2

Time of day	%
Before 9am	18%
Mornings after 9am	51%
Afternoons before 5pm	37%
Evenings after 5pm	37%

Note: The respondents to this survey were able to select multiple options

Fig 3

Day	%
Weekends	76%
Weekdays	43%

The consultation results showed that:

- There was low demand to open before 9am
- There was a higher demand for opening weekends, but since providing more weekend opening, the actual footfall, which is very low, doesn't justify the cost, other than at the larger enquiry offices

Impact

Potentially no longer providing a level of service for our customers when required that is affordable

Disability Advisory Group were consulted in 2010 and satisfied that sufficient other methods of contact were available including an appointments system

Potential opportunity

- To continue to provide wider accessibility to members of the community in the busiest places at the principal stations
- To reduce opening hours in the other front offices to still provide the service at their busiest times but increasing value for money by removing the need for shifts that attract shift allowances or weekend enhancement



Police Enquiry Office Review – Key Stakeholder Consultation

A letter was sent from ACC Paul Netherton to 52 key stakeholders in March 2014, outlining the terms of reference for the review and inviting feedback. A further letter was sent to the same stakeholders by the PCC Tony Hogg and Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer in May 2014 outlining the decision made regarding front office closures. Those written to were:

All Members of Parliament in the Force area
Unitary Council Chief Executives
Devon County Council Chief Executive
District Council Chief Executives
District Council Leaders
H.M. Courts Service
Health Service/Trusts
Crown Prosecution Service
Victim Support
Probation Service
Lord Lieutenants
Local Criminal Justice Board
Prisons

Locally presentations have been given at some parish/town councils by local Commanders or Sector Inspectors. Engagement Plans have been drawn up, building on those already in existence, and in response to specific requests regarding local police surgeries and future engagement opportunities. Some concerns were expressed regarding the 101 service. A review led by the OPCC is underway with initial findings and recommendations are due shortly. Following the closure of the 12 front offices the blue wallphones outside the police stations will receive a priority status within the call centres.

In relation to both letters sent the OPCC received 24 responses and/or letters from members of the public in relation to the closing of the enquiry offices, the Chief Constable's office received 3 letters and 4 emails. All have been responded to and, where requested, meetings have taken place with local officers or the review team to discuss the issue.



Accessibility Data

Reducing footfall to Police Front Offices is a result of:

Better and more effective means of communication, through the increased use of telephony and internet:

- In 1970, 40% of households had a landline, increasing to a maximum of **95%** in 2013 (*Source: Ofcom, 2010 & 2013*)
- In 2010 89% of the UK adult population owned/used a mobile phone . In 2013 this increased to **94%** (*Source : Ofcom, 2010 & 2013*)
- In 2010 71% of adults had broadband. In 2013 this increased to **75%** (*Source: Ofcom, 2010 & 2013*)
- Between Oct 2009 & Oct 2010, the number of visitors to the Force website was 320,693, between Oct 1 2012 - Oct 1 2013 this rose to 523,896 an increase of **63%**
- Access to Force websites using mobile data devices

October 2010 to October 2011 mobile: (55,354) 7.70%

October 2012 to October 2013 mobile: (276,681) **27.07%**, tablet: (117,671) **11.51%**

- In September 2010, a Force survey found that 60% of respondents preferred to contact the police by telephone, compared with 26% who would attend a police station. In 2013 **84.7%** of respondents preferred to contact the police by telephone, compared with **9.7%** who would attend a police station. The remainder is via letters, email and force website

The Force currently has 37 Facebook accounts and 84 Twitter accounts and younger members of the public, in particular prefer these methods of accessing policing services and information and is likely to be an area of future growth



Police Enquiry Office Review

Alternative Accessibility Methods

Issue

Over the last few years the force has invested in it's web technology and has a new website. Advances in social media have meant more members of the public are contacting us through these means rather than by traditional face to face or home telephone .

The exponential increase in mobile phone owners also means that it is easy to call the police rather than to have to find a police station and call in personally.

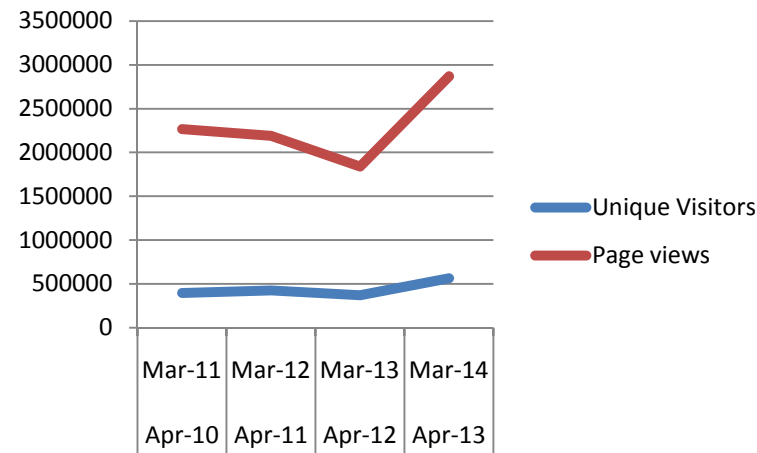
The increase in Smartphones means the public can access our internet site whilst out and about and are not dependent on having a home PC

There has been a massive increase of emails into the force as a chosen contact method over the last 10 years

Evidence

The below table shows the increase in unique visitors to our website (blue line) over the last two years in particular and the significant increase in page views (red line). This indicates that more people are accessing information on-line about our services and obtaining advice, thus negating the need for a personal visit to a police station front counter.

* The dip in stats (May-July 2013) is due to a change in the law around websites and cookie information stored.



Impact

- A reduction in footfall to front offices for non-essential enquiries as information available and accessible on line

Potential Opportunities

- Promote the use of the new force website
- FAQs already on website and will be enhanced on new website
- On-line crime recording and 'track my crime' facility
- New force 'Contact Strategy' being developed will include remote access opportunities
- Development of our own free Smartphone 'Apps'



Police Enquiry Office Review

Service when Station Enquiry Office is closed

Police telephone

Press 999

- If life is threatened, people are injured, offenders are nearby or if immediate action is required.

Press 101

- For information and advice
- To report a non-urgent crime

An outside line cannot be obtained from this telephone

Deaf/hard of hearing or speech impaired:

- Emergency SMS/text number 999
- Non-emergency SMS/text number 67101

Your nearest station



Scan this code with your smartphone to view your local policing team online information*

* Please note you will need to have a QR code reader on your phone.



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Since the 2011 Review the station signage has been modernised to reflect customers needs and improve accessibility. Working in conjunction with Buildings & Estates and Corporate Communications, new, improved signage has been agreed and a rolling programme to update and refresh the signage has begun.

A map has been included to indicate the nearest open stations along with a QR code which links directly to the Neighbourhood Website for opening times and local information.

Blue Wallphones are currently available at 65 public and non-public police premises. The calls go straight through to our police Control Rooms and will have 'priority status'

The use of IT such as QR codes and maps with GPRS information future proofs the information as changes can be reflected on the Website rather than necessitating changes to the information boards.



Re-assurance, Engagement & Visibility

Police Engagement Plans and Visibility

At the request of the PCC each Local Policing Area sector has produced its own engagement plan tailored to local need. Should the needs of the communities alter, the LPA and Sectors would want to be informed by the communities, via parish council, groups, organisations or individuals so they can adapt the plans accordingly. Each area also has a number of Special Constables, Police Cadets and Volunteers who provide assistance with policing and engagement

The below list is not exhaustive but provides examples of highly visible partner agencies and advertised schemes providing re-assurance and support to the communities of Devon and Cornwall

Evening and night time economy

Military Shore Patrol (based at Plymouth but service Barnstaple and Exmouth)

Street Pastor scheme (Forcewide)

Street Marshalls (North Devon)

SIA door staff (Forcewide)

Safe guarding

Mental Health nurses on patrol (Plymouth & Exeter)

J9 (retail premises as a safe haven for Domestic Abuse victims - North Devon & Cornwall)

Safeplaces (retail premises offering support for people with learning difficulties - Forcewide)

