



# *Stop Search*

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## Introduction:

This report examines data retrieved from Stop Search records and compliance with Best Use of Stop Search Scheme (BUSSS) relating to Durham Constabulary. The characteristics of the subjects of Stop Searches, the locations where Stop Search is most likely to occur, and the reasons for Stop Searches will be identified.

Local demographic data will be used to identify any groups who may be disproportionately represented in this sample, and findings compared to national figures for Stop Search.

## Key Findings:

### **Data Quality:**

Data quality relating to Stop Searches was good, although analysis was limited by sparse information relating to the ethnicity, disability and mental health of those who come into contact with Durham Constabulary and the wider general population of County Durham and Darlington.

### **Subjects of Stop Searches:**

- In 2017/18 3 people in every 1000 in Durham were subject to a Stop Search with the profile of the typical subject of a Stop Search being a white male aged between 30-44 years old.
- It is indicated that people of black and Asian ethnicity are represented at a higher proportion than other ethnicities, with 6 in every 1000 black people and 4 in every 1000 Asian being Stop Searched compared to 2 in every 1000 white people. This is a trend that is reflected on both a national level and across the North East, however it is important to note that in Durham the numbers of individuals that this actually represents is small – being 4 black people and 14 Asian - the relatively small numbers of these groups in Durham affect the analysis.

### **Reasons for Stop Search and Outcomes**

- The total number of Stop Searches in County Durham has decreased since 2016/17, which mirrors the national picture.
- Stop Searches for Offensive Weapons has increased since 2016/17, which may be linked to the recent media focus on knife crime –although recorded offences for Possession of an Offensive Weapon in Durham have seen a downward trend for the same period.
- The outcomes of Stop Searches have seen a varied pattern of change with arrests decreasing in number, but cautions, community resolutions and Cannabis warnings increasing. The most frequent outcome of the 2017/18 Stop Searches was No Further Action (64%). Of those Stop Searches that

resulted in a positive outcome (36%), 78% related to the original reason for Stop Search. \*\*Note – Addendum 2019 - An independent review conducted in 2018 found Durham Constabulary achieved high compliance rate in terms of the grounds for Stop Searches.

### **Locations and times of Stop Search**

- As is to be expected the top locations for frequency of Stop Searches are Darlington, Durham City and Bishop Auckland –cities with a large resident and visiting population. It was notable that almost twice as many Stop Searches were conducted in Darlington as the next most frequent location, Durham City. The high number of Stop Searches in Darlington may have been impacted by two operations as well as targeted hotspot policing, all of which included increased Stop Searches as part of the tactics, appropriate for the targeted crime types.
- Comparison with local population data indicates that the population of Bishop Auckland is most likely to be Stop Searched – however, this assumes that Stop Searches were all on local residents which may not be the case. Further work looking at the home addresses of subjects would provide a more complete picture of the ratio of Stop Searches amongst the resident and visiting populations. Durham Constabulary will now undertake further analysis of this area.

### **Officers**

- Officers from Response and Cleveland & Durham Specialist Operations Unit (CDSOU) were responsible for 77% of all Stop Searches in the sample, which is indicative of an incident/target led approach to Stop Search. The relatively low proportion of Stop Searches conducted by Neighbourhoods teams (12%) may be a reflection of both the changing role of this Command, as well as the recommendation from BUSSS that Stop Search be targeted and intelligence led.

### Methodology:

- Stop Search records in the sample are those submitted during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.
- Local demographic data is taken from the National Census 2011. ONS population predictions were not used in this profile as they do not contain breakdown by ethnicity. The Census 2011 data is therefore the only complete comparative data available.
- National data for Stop Search is from the Home Office published figures May 2018.
- Compliance with BUSSS is measured through Chief Inspector reviews, in which all Stop Search records are measured for compliance with each element of BUSSS as well as overall quality.

### Data Quality

- Stop Search data was of generally good quality.
- Sparse details in person records for ethnicity, disability and mental health difficulties meant that analysis of the Stop Search subjects in these fields was limited.

### Numbers of Stop Searches:

The number of Stop Searches has seen a downward trend nationally, with 2016/17 seeing the lowest numbers recorded since data collection began in 2001/02.<sup>1</sup> (Home Office national data for year 2017/18 will not be available until October 2018).

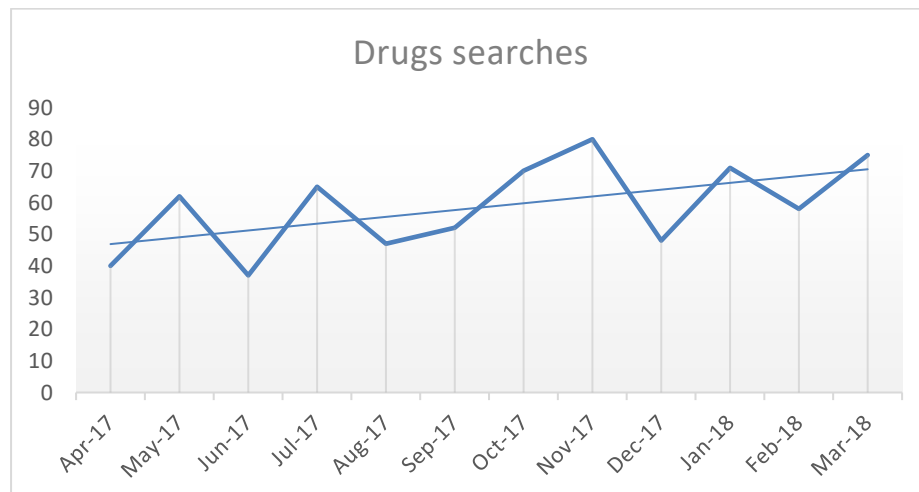
This has been reflected in Durham also, with a drop of 15% in Stop Searches conducted in 2017/18 compared to 2016/17. The fall has been across all categories of reasons for search with the exception of Offensive Weapons which has seen an increase of 6.7% in the same timeframe. This may be linked to the recent media focus on knife crime across the country, although it is worth noting that recorded crimes for Possession of an Offensive Weapon in Durham have seen a downward trend for the same period.

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<sup>1</sup> Police Powers and Procedures, England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2017.

|                          | 2016/2017 | 2017/2018 | % change |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| <b>Drugs</b>             | 815       | 705       | -13.40%  |
| <b>Firearms</b>          | 14        | 12        | -14.20%  |
| <b>Going Equipped</b>    | 322       | 297       | -7%      |
| <b>Offensive Weapons</b> | 179       | 191       | 6.70%    |
| <b>Stolen Property</b>   | 406       | 281       | -30%     |
| <b>Other</b>             | 42        | 21        | -50%     |
| <b>Total for year</b>    | 1778      | 1507      | -15.20%  |

Hypothesis: one possible reason for the decline in the numbers of Stop Searches was as a result of a training package released in April 2017 by the College of Policing. The package included the guidance to Officers that the smell of cannabis alone was not a sufficient justification for a Stop Search, and it had been suggested that this may have made Officers hesitant to Stop Search for drugs. Analysis of the 2017/18 data however has shown that this has not been the case and that Stop Searches for drugs have seen an upward trend from April 2017 to March 2018.



## Outcomes of Stop Searches

The outcomes of Stop Searches have seen a varied pattern of change with arrests decreasing in number, but cautions, community resolutions and cannabis warnings increasing. The most frequent outcome of the 2017/18 Stop Searches was No Further Action (64%), although No Further Action has also seen a decrease of 20% on the previous 12 months.

For 2016/17, nationally, No Further Action was also the most frequent Outcome at 71%, with Durham at 68% - meaning that Durham had a slightly higher proportion of positive outcomes of Stop Searches than those that resulted in no action.

78% of positive outcomes related to the original reason for the Stop Search - the same rate as in 2016/17. The national rate of positive outcomes linked to reason for search for 2016/17 was 72%<sup>2</sup>, so Durham is performing somewhat better than the national picture in this regard.

**\*\*Note – Addendum January 2019 - An independent review conducted in 2018 found Durham Constabulary achieved high compliance rate in terms of the grounds for Stop Searches.**

| Outcomes                 | 2016/2017 | 2017/2018 | % change |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Actioned                 | 25        | 12        | -52%     |
| Arrest                   | 312       | 288       | -7.60%   |
| Caution                  | 9         | 18        | 100%     |
| Community Resolution     | 10        | 20        | 100%     |
| Khat/Cannabis warning    | 76        | 78        | 2.60%    |
| Penalty Notice           | 7         | 4         | -42.80%  |
| Summoned/charged by post | 31        | 21        | -32.20%  |
| Verbal Warning           | 96        | 100       | 4.10%    |
| No action taken          | 1212      | 966       | -20.20%  |

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<sup>2</sup> Best Use of Stop Search Police Powers and Procedures Mar 17

### Locations of Stop Searches:

78 records did not contain a location record with a Locality for analysis. The following data is based on 1429 Stop Search records.

The top three locations for frequency of Stop Searches are Darlington, Durham City and Bishop Auckland. This is to be expected as these are cities with a combination of residents and a visiting population. It is notable that Darlington conducted almost twice (93%) more Stop Searches than the next most frequent location, Durham City. This may have been impacted by two Operations in Darlington, as well as targeted Hot Spot Policing, all of which included increased Stop Searches as tactics.



The following charts show the number of Stop Searches as a % of the sample for each locality, and the % of that locality's population that is likely to be subject to a Stop Search. It can be seen that although Darlington has the largest number of Stop Searches, the population of Bishop Auckland have a higher likelihood of being Stop Searched. It should be borne in mind however, that this data is based on the location of the Stop Search and the resident population of that town. \*Further analysis will be undertaken to provide better understanding of this.



| Town              | Count | % of sample | rank in sample |
|-------------------|-------|-------------|----------------|
| Barnard Castle    | 25    | 1.75%       | 12             |
| Bishop Auckland   | 199   | 13.93%      | 3              |
| Chester-Le-Street | 67    | 4.69%       | 8              |
| Consett           | 97    | 6.79%       | 6              |
| Crook             | 47    | 3.29%       | 10             |
| Darlington        | 395   | 27.64%      | 1              |
| Durham City       | 204   | 14.28%      | 2              |
| Newton Aycliffe   | 109   | 7.63%       | 5              |
| Peterlee          | 79    | 5.53%       | 7              |
| Seaham            | 31    | 2.17%       | 11             |
| Spennymoor        | 124   | 8.68%       | 4              |
| Stanley           | 52    | 3.64%       | 9              |

| Town              | Count | Population | % of population | rank of % of population |
|-------------------|-------|------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Darlington        | 395   | 101110     | 0.39%           | 2                       |
| Durham City       | 204   | 96413      | 0.21%           | 5                       |
| Bishop Auckland   | 199   | 36419      | 0.55%           | 1                       |
| Spennymoor        | 124   | 38194      | 0.32%           | 3                       |
| Newton Aycliffe   | 109   | 49887      | 0.22%           | 4                       |
| Consett           | 97    | 48994      | 0.20%           | 6                       |
| Peterlee          | 79    | 52289      | 0.15%           | 7                       |
| Chester-Le-Street | 67    | 53056      | 0.13%           | 8                       |
| Stanley           | 52    | 38959      | 0.13%           | 8                       |
| Crook             | 47    | 22428      | 0.21%           | 5                       |
| Seaham            | 31    | 42760      | 0.07%           | 9                       |
| Barnard Castle    | 25    | 19890      | 0.13%           | 8                       |

## Subjects of Stop Search:

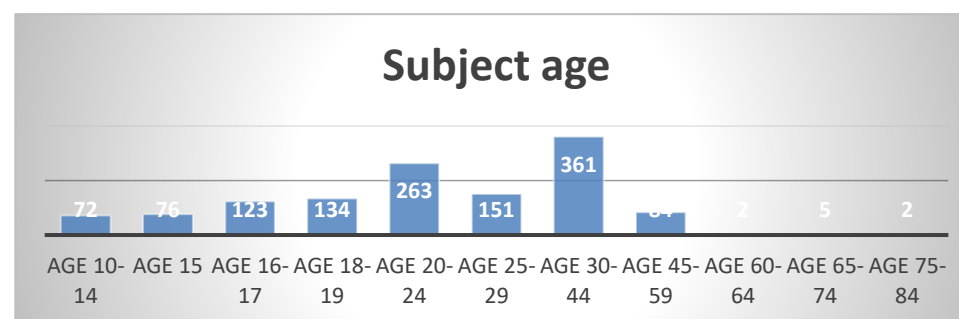
Age ranges and ethnicity have been categorised according to Census 2011 groupings for comparison.

In summary:

- The profile of the typical subject of Stop Search is a white male aged between 30-44 years.
- In 2017/18, 3 per every 1000 of the population of Durham was subject to Stop Search – the same rate as 2016/17.
- The rate at which black and Asian people are Stop Searched has increased in Durham since the previous 12 months, however it is important to note that this is a representation of very small numbers of individuals – 4 black people and 14 Asian.
- Drugs is the most common reason for Stop Search up to age 44, after which Stolen Goods becomes the more common reason for stop.

The sample contained 1275 individuals.

| Age range | sample | Population of Durham | per 1000 population | most common reason for stop |
|-----------|--------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Age 10-14 | 72     | 27869                | 2.5                 | Drugs                       |
| Age 15    | 76     | 5882                 | 2.7                 | Drugs                       |
| Age 16-17 | 123    | 12107                | 4.4                 | Drugs                       |
| Age 18-19 | 134    | 15278                | 4.8                 | Drugs                       |
| Age 20-24 | 263    | 35155                | 9.4                 | Drugs                       |
| Age 25-29 | 151    | 30628                | 5.4                 | Drugs                       |
| Age 30-44 | 361    | 96150                | 12.9                | Drugs                       |
| Age 45-59 | 84     | 108200               | 3                   | Stolen Goods                |
| Age 60-64 | 2      | 35395                | 0.07                | Stolen Goods / Blade        |
| Age 65-74 | 5      | 50883                | 0.1                 | Stolen Goods / drugs        |
| Age 75-84 | 2      | 30635                | 0.07                | Stolen Goods / Customs      |



**Gender & ethnicity**

| Gender                      | In sample | Population of Durham | per 1000 population |
|-----------------------------|-----------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Female / Transgender Female | 113       | 261962               | 0.4                 |
| Male / Transgender Male     | 989       | 251280               | 3.9                 |
| Indeterminate               | 1         | Not recorded         | N/A                 |
| Not recorded                | 172       | Not recorded         | N/A                 |

|                          | In Sample | Population of Durham | % of sample | Per 1000 population | Ranking by per 1000 population |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Asian (or Asian British) | 14        | 3258                 | 1.10%       | 4                   | 2                              |
| Black (or Black British) | 4         | 701                  | 0.31%       | 6                   | 1                              |
| Chinese                  | 1         | 1598                 | 0.08%       | 0.6                 | 6                              |
| Mixed                    | 6         | 3094                 | 0.47%       | 2                   | 5                              |
| White                    | 1236      | 503796               | 96.94%      | 2                   | 4                              |
| Other                    | 3         | 822                  | 0.24%       | 4                   | 3                              |
| Unknown                  | 11        | N/A                  | 0.86%       | N/A                 | N/A                            |

It can be seen from the table above that the black and Asian population of Durham are more likely to be Stop Searched than any other ethnicity. This is a trend that is reflected on both a national and regional level. To place Durham's findings in context the following table shows the per 1000 population of each ethnic category nationally and for the North East Forces:

| Region      | Of total population | Asian  | Black   | Mixed  | White  |
|-------------|---------------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| National    | 5/1000              | 8/1000 | 29/1000 | 9/1000 | 4/1000 |
| Durham      | 3/1000              | 3/1000 | 5/1000  | 4/1000 | 3/1000 |
| Cleveland   | 2/1000              | 3/1000 | 5/1000  | 0/1000 | 2/1000 |
| Northumbria | 3/1000              | 3/1000 | 9/1000  | 2/1000 | 3/1000 |

The rate at which black and Asian people are Stop Searched has increased in Durham since the previous 12 months, however it is important to note that this is a representation of very small numbers of individuals – 4 black people and 14 Asian.

The monitoring of the ethnicity of subjects is part of the Chief Inspectors review of Stop Search; any significant increases in ethnic ratios should be picked up at an early stage.

\* Figures published by the Home Office for 2016/17.

### Perceived disabilities and Mental Health of subjects:

Disability prevalence figures for the North East indicate that 25% of the population have a disability that impacts their daily lives <sup>3</sup>. In contrast, Durham Constabulary's data does not reflect this proportion because we do not routinely collect data regarding disabilities or mental health of persons we come into contact with, therefore any analysis of the proportion of individuals with disabilities or mental health problems that are Stop Searched is likely to be inaccurate.

### Officers:

The following table illustrates the number of Stop Searches conducted in the period by Command. It can be seen that Response conducted slightly more than half of all Stop Searches, and Response and CDSOU combined responsible for 77.9% of the total which is indicative of an incident/target led approach to Stop Search. The relatively low proportion of Stop Searches conducted by Neighbourhoods teams may be a reflection of both the changing role of this Command, as well as the recommendation from BUSSS that Stop Search be targeted and intelligence led.

| Command  | Total stop/search in sample | % of sample |
|----------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Response | 772                         | 51.23%      |
| CDSOU    | 402                         | 26.68%      |
| NPT      | 185                         | 12.28%      |
| Other    | 148                         | 9.82%       |

### Of 405 individual officers in the sample:

| Command  | Total stop/search in sample | Headcount in Force | % of Headcount conducting Stop Search |
|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Response | 240                         | 500                | 48.00%                                |
| CDSOU    | 52                          | 93                 | 55.91%                                |
| NPT      | 52                          | 211                | 24.64%                                |

More Officers from CDSOU conducted a Stop Search than other Commands, although Response is not significantly less with nearly half of Response Officers having carried out a Stop Search, while Neighbourhood Officers are less likely to Stop Search.

Of note amongst the 'Other' category are the Special Constabulary, with 22% of Special Officers having conducted a Stop Search in this period which is almost comparable to Neighbourhoods.

\*Force Headcounts correct as of May 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Family Resources Survey 2016/17 Department for Work and Pensions

## Monitoring and Best Use of Stop Search Scheme:

The Best Use of Stop Search Scheme (BUSSS) was introduced by the Home Secretary in April 2014 with the aim to improve transparency around the Stop Search process and its outcomes within the wider community. The Key aims of BUSSS are:

- Data recording – Forces should record a broader range of Stop Search outcomes e.g arrests, cautions, penalty notices, and should demonstrate whether or not the outcome was linked to the reason for the Stop Search.
- Lay observation policies – providing members of the community to accompany officers on patrol and using Stop Search.
- Stop and Search complaints 'community trigger' – a policy requiring the Police to explain to local community scrutiny groups how powers are being used where there is a large volume of complaints.
- Reducing the section 60 'no suspicion' stop searches by raising the level of authorisation to senior officer (above the rank of chief superintendent).

A monitoring process is in place whereby Chief Inspectors review every Stop Search for their Localities against the BUSSS criteria. Any non-compliance is addressed with the submitting officer and advice given. Statistics are also compiled on the reasons for Stop Searches, ethnicity and repeat subjects, and submitting officers.

It was noted during the compilation of the report that location statistics are compiled using the officer's reporting station field. This will give an inaccurate picture of the distribution of Stop Searches around the county as officers can conduct Stop Search outside of their reporting station area. For example the Stop Searches conducted by CDSOU, based at Spennymoor, were mapped and found to cover a wide geographical area – ranging from Washington, Hartlepool and Darlington.

**\*\*Note – addendum February 2018:** Public scrutiny panels for Stop Search have commenced in 2018.

The following groups were engaged in the scrutiny process:

- New College Durham
- Age UK
- Phoenix Trans Group
- Wear & Tees Fire Cadets
- Durham Constabulary Cadets
- PRU Schools – Elemore School
- Durham Sixth Form PACT Meeting

- Police Support Volunteers
- Darlington Unity Group
- Derwentside College
- Durham Miners Association
- The Independent Advisory group (IAG)

Whilst one stop search was identified by the group as failing to follow procedures which was addressed by the force lead on stop search along with their supervision, all other searches examined were considered legal proportionate and necessary by the groups.

As a result of this scrutiny the following questions were raised from various panels:

- When searching a person who is visually impaired or blind how an officer can ensure the person feels safe and is clear they are a genuine officer before the search commences.
- How do we search children, ensure they understand their rights and ensure they feel safe and supported?
- What is in place to provide a copy of the search form for a person who is visually impaired or blind?
- How do we ensure persons with learning disabilities understand the grounds and their rights with the stop search process?
- Do we ask the appropriate questions prior to searching someone from the transgender community and search them accordingly?
- With the high percentage of people registered disabled within our communities are officers aware of issues regarding search people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities or wheelchairs. Do officers always see the hidden disabilities?
- Bodycam footage on occasions was difficult to view or failed to capture the entire search due to position.

From listening to the concerns raised a comprehensive 2 year training programme commenced in September 2018 called “knowing your communities”, to address and highlight how officers should conduct searches involving the trans community, deaf and hard of hearing communities, visually impaired or blind people, those with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and autism. The training includes how we communicate and search children of all ages including babies and considerations for officers when searching those in our communities who may be unable to communicate in English. The ‘knowing your communities has a training that was identified from stop and search scrutiny is to be adapted and rolled out to all Durham constabulary staff and officers. This will also be reinforced in an internal training session around hate crime, running in 2019 named the ‘Do It Right, Do It Better’.

The evaluation from the stop search scrutiny can be located on the Durham Constabulary web site - [Stop & Search Findings](#)

**Appendix:**