



# News release

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Corporate & Organisational Communications Team

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Good morning

Please see the below press release about the recent performance of Devon & Cornwall Police's control room.

Media are invited to join us tomorrow, Wednesday 15 January, at HQ Middlemoor. Details are listed in the notes to editors.

**Please note:** This media release is embargoed until 12pm on 15 January 2025.

Regards,

Natasha Radford

Corporate Communications Officer

## **Significant improvement in 999 and 101 service in Devon and Cornwall**

14 January 2025

Devon & Cornwall Police has significantly improved the speed at which the Force answers 999 calls and 101 contact.

The rapid improvement of services within the Force's control room placed Devon & Cornwall Police as ninth fastest to respond to emergency calls in November 2024 compared to 44 other forces.

In 2024, 94.2 per cent of 999 calls were answered within the threshold of 10 seconds, an improvement of 5.8% compared to 2023. In the second half of the year, the average wait time for 101 calls was 3 minutes 43 seconds, almost 27 minutes quicker than same period the previous year.

Devon & Cornwall Police received over 69,000 reports through the Force website in 2024. Across the whole year, the average wait time was less than 12 hours. This dropped to just under five hours in December 2024. By switching from taking reports by email to nationally standardised forms, the control room can now take more

thorough and accurate information at the initial point of contact, saving time for members of the public.

Last September the Force was formally discharged by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) from the Engage phase of enhanced monitoring in relation to contacting the Force, following the Inspectorate's concerns regarding emergency and non-emergency calls. In discharging the Force, the Inspectorate noted that Devon & Cornwall Police had made significant and sustainable improvements.

Devon & Cornwall Police have also been working with the NHS and social care providers across the Force area to implement Right Care, Right Person, a process to ensure that individuals who are experiencing poor mental health get the support they need from the relevant agency, which is often not the police. Control room staff are trained to assess the situation and provide the caller with guidance if the threshold for police attendance is not met.

Assistant Chief Constable Nikki Leaper said: "These rapid improvements in our handling of emergency and non-emergency contact from the public are proof of the continued hard work and dedication of officers and staff across all areas of the control room and at our front offices.

"People should feel confident that Devon & Cornwall Police can deliver the service our communities deserve. However, we recognise that past experiences of delays and queues may affect people's perceptions. My hope is that we will continue to improve our contact with the public to ensure that victims receive the service they rightly deserve, and this will be felt across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

"Our recent performance is excellent, but we will not be complacent. If you're not receiving a good service, I am keen to hear your feedback."

Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez said: "In 2017 I set a strategic ambition to improve connectivity between Devon and Cornwall Police and the public it serves. That strategy has been backed by significant investment in reopening 18 police enquiry offices and recruiting and training contact officers whose front-line role is crucial to policing.

"I am delighted that the hard work and investment by our communities via their council tax precept is finally paying dividends. However, we cannot be complacent and I will work with the Chief Constable to ensure that the service improvements continue."

Your feedback helps shape and improve police services. Whether it's a thank you to an individual officer or a complaint about the way we handled something, we want to hear from you.

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/fo/feedback/>

**ENDS**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **Information about 999 and 101 demand in Devon and Cornwall**

- Devon & Cornwall Police took 586,439 contacts (999, 101 and online) in 2024. 300,456 calls to 999, 216,610 to 101, and 69,373 online reports.
- Nationally in November 2024, Devon & Cornwall Police had the ninth quickest answer times of the 44 forces (December's data not yet available).
- Devon & Cornwall Police was moved to the Engage phase of enhanced monitoring by HMICFRS in October 2022. At the time, the inspectorate noted: "Between 1 November 2021 and 31 August 2022, the force answered 66.7 percent of 999 calls within 10 seconds – below the target of 90 percent in 10 seconds." Source: <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/peel-reports/devon-and-cornwall-2021-22/>
- Audio recordings of real 999 calls that should have been 101 calls are available on request.

### **Media opportunity in Exeter**

Media are invited to the control room at Middlemoor HQ, Exeter, on **Wednesday 15 January 2025** between **10am to 12pm**. There will be an opportunity to interview Assistant Chief Constable Nikki Leaper, senior staff from the department, and call handlers.

If you would like to attend, please contact [Corpchangecomms@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Corpchangecomms@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk). Please provide names of those attending and vehicle registrations.

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