

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE

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Subject: Disproportionality in use of Voluntary Interviews

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to investigate whether there are any variations in the manner that Voluntary Interviews are used according to the demographics of the suspect.

2. Findings

During the period 1st January 2026 to 31st July 2026, 8,683 individuals were dealt with within one of the Custody Suites within Leicestershire (some on more than one occasion). Over the same time period Niche recorded that 1,984 persons were dealt with by means of a Voluntary Interview, the details of 1,384 which are recorded on Pronto. It might be of some concern that this only represents 70% of the total VAs compared to 75% the previous time that this analysis was completed.

The demographics of those arrested opposed to VAd have been examined according to Age, Gender and Ethnicity.

The table below summarises the comparison.

	VAs	Arrests	% VA	% Arrests	Assessment (Arrests v VAs)
All Arrivals	1,384	8,683			
10-13 Years of Age	44	43	3.2%	0.5%%	No Significant Difference
14-15 Years of Age	78	209	5.7%	2.4%	No Significant Difference
16-17 Years of Age	72	340	5.3%	3.9%	No Significant Difference
18-30 Years	345	2,792	25.3%	32.4%	Higher
31-40 Years	291	2,485	21.4%	28.8%	Higher
41-50 Years	260	1,845	19.1%	21.4%	No Significant Difference
51-60 Years	148	646	10.9%	7.5%	No Significant Difference
61+ Years	123	255	9.0%	3.0%	No Significant Difference
Female	342	1,253	25.1%	14.5%	Lower
White	874	5,012	71.6%	70.0%	No Significant Difference
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	35	245	2.9%	3.7%	No Significant Difference
Asian/Asian British	199	888	16.3%	14.3%	No Significant Difference
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	89	628	7.3%	8.7%	No Significant Difference
Other ethnic group	23	211	1.9%	3.3%	No Significant Difference

Whilst the summary would suggest that suspects aged 18-40 are more likely to be dealt with by being arrested rather than a VA and, conversely, that Females are more likely to

be VAd than arrested, further analysis suggests that this may be a product of the criminality that the individuals are suspected of involvement in. Another factor could be the location of the events as a disproportionate amount of crime takes place in the city where all of the Custody Suites are located and hence one of the benefits of utilising a VA to alleviate the need to travel a significant distance would not be relevant.

Only 17.1% of those arrested within the 18-40 year of age grouping were females (compared to 29.1% of those VAd within this age grouping).. So since that age bracket represents the largest “offending grouping” the apparent gender disproportionality is probably due to this age disproportionality.

The next table shows the likelihood of persons of BMEs being arrested / VA compared to a person of White ethnicity.

	Compared to Persons of White ethnicity	
	Arrested	VAs
White	Base	Base
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1.4 x	0.8 x
Asian/Asian British	0.7 x	1.2 x
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	2.9 x	0.8 x
Other ethnic group	1.4 x	0.5 x

Whilst the data might suggest that there are numerical differences in how suspects are being dealt with in terms of whether they are arrested or interviewed voluntarily. Particularly in terms of persons of Black ethnicities, the differences are within the bounds of statistical error and hence the data does not provide any evidence that there are genuine differences as opposed to being merely “statistical noise”.

3. Conclusion

Notwithstanding numerical variations, it would appear that Voluntary Interviews are being utilised as a tactic significantly less amongst suspects aged 18 to 40 and these people are being arrested instead.

It is probable that this is as result of both the nature of the crimes that this age group are suspected of having committed coupled with the location of the offending in relation to the location of the Custody Suites.