

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE

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DEPARTMENT: Criminal Justice.

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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 October 2024 to 31st March 2025, 8,067 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 1,899 persons were dealt with by means of a Voluntary Interview, the details of 1,259 which are recorded on Pronto. Whilst this only represents 66% of the total VAs the use of Pronto is increasing month on month.

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	1,259	8,067			
10-13 Years of Age	48	35	3.9%	0.4%	No Significant Difference
14-15 Years of Age	58	166	4.7%	2.1%	No Significant Difference
16-17 Years of Age	65	307	5.2%	3.8%	No Significant Difference
18-30 Years	325	2,756	26.1%	34.3%	Higher
31-40 Years	284	2,313	22.8%	28.8%	No Significant Difference
41-50 Years	217	1,638	17.5%	20.4%	No Significant Difference
51-60 Years	148	593	11.9%	7.4%	No Significant Difference
61+ Years	98	217	7.9%	2.7%	No Significant Difference

Female	325	1,248	26.4%	15.6%	Lower
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White	809	5,003	73.5%	70.5%	No Significant Difference
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	36	232	3.3%	3.3%	No Significant Difference
Asian/Asian British	172	1,017	15.6%	14.3%	No Significant Difference
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	65	645	5.9%	9.1%	No Significant Difference
Other ethnic group	18	204	1.6%	2.9%	No Significant Difference

Whilst the summary would suggest that suspects aged 18-30 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 14.4% of those arrested within the 18-30 year of age grouping were females (compared to 28.3% 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 the 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	1.2 x	1.0 x
Asian/Asian British	0.8 x	1.0 x
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	2.8 x	0.6 x
Other ethnic group	1.1 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 or Other 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 30, 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.