



[Predictive policing](#) uses predictive analytics to tie crimes to people or places. The techniques are moving beyond existing approaches such as [CCTV-based pattern analysis and surveillance](#) towards [algorithms that forecast where crimes are likely to occur and who might commit them](#); and on towards making recommendations for allocating police resources.

Responses are granular and directed. Patrols are sent to a specific city block rather than to a whole neighbourhood and crime data are added daily to generate predictions for each shift.

Of course, predictive policing raises a number of issues around privacy and civil rights. [Emerging reports on practice in China](#) suggest that the approach might be used for social control as easily as it might be used to fight crime; and New Orleans police could surely have predicted that [piloting the approach without telling officials they were doing so](#) was a risky approach.

Nevertheless – and more openly – Chicago is increasing its investment in the technology. And new systems like [LineSight](#), a Unisys system which could help authorities flag suspicious people and cargo at border crossings and airports around the world “in as little as two seconds,” show how technology can support policing.

Implications for Gwent

[Greater Manchester Police](#) and [Kent Police](#) have been trialling predictive policing since 2012 and are (broadly) positive about the results. While some experts believe there is a [lot of progress yet to be made](#) – that is, of course, the nature of trialling something new – the general mood seems to be that this is one important approach to crime fighting in the future.

An important issue for improving predictive policing is the accessibility and quality of the data being used. [Big Data and Policing](#), a report published by the Royal United Services Institute in September 2017 explores the issues around this in some detail and identifies four priorities for strengthening predictive policing. It also identifies barriers to implementation and calls for greater investment and improved practice to support the approach.

Most of the report’s 14 recommendations are directed at Police Forces and Policing bodies but one - *Shared MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) databases should be created to allow for better data sharing between the police and partner agencies* - calls on local authorities, social services and the police to collaborate closely when identifying vulnerable individuals in need of safeguarding. Shared MASH databases would facilitate this while also giving the police quick access to information that could prove vital for ongoing investigations.

How might the issue impact on Gwent in the future

Very uncertain Rather uncertain Reasonably clear Very clear



How might Gwent public services respond?

Watch and wait Consider response Plan and prepare Act

