

Delivering the transformative Police Assaults and Injuries App

Discover how the Agilisys Data and Decisions Team leveraged Microsoft technology to develop an app that enables UK police forces to collect more information on assaults and injuries to enhance response and decision-making.

The Situation

Police officers and staff face aggression and confrontation daily. More than 41,000 assaults on police officers were reported nationally in FY 2021/22—a figure which increased 11% from the previous year. The true figure is likely to be higher though, with assaults on other members of Police staff such as Detention Officers not captured.

All assaults, regardless of severity, have an impact of some kind, some more obvious than others. As well as the impact on the victim, it extends to their colleagues and families, effecting physical and psychological issues. No assault should be overlooked.

To make reporting of assaults easier and to gain a better national picture of assaults on police colleagues, an innovative Microsoft-powered app – the Police Assaults and Injuries App – was rolled out in 2022.

Developed by Agilisys, in partnership with the National Police Wellbeing Service, the Police Digital Service and Microsoft, the app enables police forces to record incidents of assault against officers and staff in a consistent way.

This reporting is central to the success of the national police Operation Hampshire programme. Phase two of the app, released in May 2023, extends data collection to cover more incidents and provide more background information, improving future responses and strategic decision-making.



What is Operation Hampshire?

Operation Hampshire is a national initiative to improve the response to police officer and staff assaults. Having achieved national status, the programme is recognised by the Police Federation in England and Wales, the National Police Chief's Council, and now the Home Office through the police covenant.

A core aim of Operation Hampshire is to make sure that every force has both a strategy and the tools to deliver a suitable, consistent response when a police colleague is assaulted.

But that's only part of the story. The longer-term elements of the programme are to understand more about the scale and trends of assaults, for informed, data-driven decisions to be made around risk management, equipment, and policy support, helping to reduce the number of assaults on police colleagues and the harm caused by them.

Central to the success of Operation Hampshire was the development of the Police Assaults and Injuries App.

The Police Assaults and Injuries App: building the foundations

Agilisys were instrumental in the development of the Police Assaults and Injuries App, which provides every force with the tool it needs to provide the accurate data that will positively drive change going forward.

Built in Microsoft Power Apps, the solution is available to all forces who already have the Microsoft 365 Platform because of the National Enabling Programme (NEP) – all forces have or will have Microsoft 365 by the end of 2023. Forces can use the same application, free of charge, within their existing Microsoft licences.

Phase one of the app enables officers to log assaults, allowing police forces and supervisors to keep track of data and make the necessary changes to support officers with extra equipment or wellbeing services as required. The app also signposts supervisors to perform welfare assessments on officers who log assaults, whilst feeding data into nationwide figures to help tackle issues and change policing on a national level.

Assaults data from the app is owned and managed at force level. Forces still lead the local response to incidents following the Operation Hampshire process, ensuring officers and staff are supported and relevant actions are taken.

Redacted force level information also meets the requirements of a national data request and Annual Data Return. This supports providing a deeper understanding of the true levels of violence used against officers and staff; bringing the data together to provide a UK-wide overview.



Challenge: taking the app to the next level

While phase one of the app focused solely on police officer and staff assaults, and feedback was positive, Operation Hampshire needed more information, which was delivered with the second phase of the app.

Agilisys were asked to build on the already published app and add new question sets which recorded health and safety, death and severe injury, and suicide data.

Phase two developments were required to provide a central set of police employee harm relevant questions (building on what already exists in phase one) that span a range of data points. The app must provide a user-friendly way of completing these questions that takes a logical path, avoids duplication, and only exposes the user to the questions relevant to the incident.

This additional information required included Health & Safety relevant information and sensitive data around death and suicide. This data was added to the existing data captured around

assault methodology, the interactions that took place prior to the assaults and demographics around length of service, age, gender and ethnicity, and types of roles being performed by police colleagues. This facilitates being able to get a complete picture of who is more vulnerable, and in what situations.

Agilisys had three months to work in collaboration with the National Police Wellbeing Service to take several rounds of question sets and distil these into a cohesive set of requirements, whilst protecting as much of the existing phase one build as possible.



Methodology

The Agilisys Data and Decision Team delivered phase two of the app using the following methodology:

- 1** An Agilisys business analyst and project manager engaged with the service to understand the requirements, expectations and new flow design needed in full.
- 2** Design workshops were held to review, document and agree on the requirements (question sets), the variance from phase one to phase two, and what would be possible within the periods presented.
- 3** An agile delivery was followed to break big processes into smaller logical chunks, to enable faster delivery.
- 4** Robust functional and user acceptance testing was followed before releasing the application to be shared on the Police Digital Service Catalogue.
- 5** A live streamed presentation and demo of the application took place centrally to all forces to launch the application, later shared via YouTube's police channels.

Impact

While, at the time of writing, phase two of this app has only just been released, initial feedback is positive, with multiple requests for more detailed demos being requested and held.

In just one month, the number of forces to have downloaded the app is already into double figures.

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Our colleagues regularly face confrontation, aggression and violence while protecting the public. It is a job like no other. It is essential that we provide them with a meaningful response when they are subject to assault. This includes having a greater understanding of the issue and using information to make informed decisions around risk and to identify improvements that either reduce the level of assaults or at least minimise the impact.

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Dave Brewster

National Operation Hampshire Co-ordinator

Summary

The Police Assaults and Injuries App is a cloud-based software solution built on the Microsoft Power Platform technology framework, which has been developed to provide police forces with an integrated platform for managing and reporting on incidents, assaults and injuries against their front-line officers and staff, assuring quality and consistency in reporting.

This latest release of the solution can be used to log details of an incident and then subsequently categorise the incident into an assault, accident, road traffic accident, death/suspected suicide, or attempted suicide, all with or without an injury. Relevant health and safety questions can then be completed for the incident. The questions on this page are not mandatory but users are encouraged to complete as much information as they can that is relevant to the incident being reported.

The solution benefits at a glance:

- Accessible and easy to use
- Works on almost any device, mobile, tablet or desktop – assuming a stable internet connection is available
- Easy and cost-effective to deploy
- Meets the service requirements for a police force that needs to report incidents, assaults, and injuries in line with Operation's Hampshire's guidelines
- Provides a dynamic user experience
- Provides a feedback loop between frontline officers and senior officers
- Allow secure access via Microsoft 365 identities
- Deliver business information to management groups for targeted improvement
- Delivers value for money, being able to be used within current licence constraints
- Can easily be accessed from Microsoft Teams

Police officers are already working around the clock, so the last thing they need is a system that takes up even more of their time.

Therefore, the Agilisys team built the app with simplicity in mind; it is designed to speed up processes, consolidate data for easy analysis, and to make life easier for front line police officers and supervisors.

At the heart of this use and the app's success is Microsoft technology. Utilising the Microsoft Dataverse for Teams environment and specifically designed on Power Apps for Teams, the app is easy to maintain, enhance, record, and add features to when the need arises.

Most importantly, the app is accessible to everybody. Forces are at different stages in their Office 365 journey, and those at an earlier stage still have the facility to download and use this app. In addition, because of the flexibility of the Microsoft ecosystem, where a Force needs to utilise the app in a SharePoint environment, rather than Teams, the app can be integrated with minimal effort.

The fact that the app is built on the Microsoft platform means that it can be used for free by Forces. This negates the issue of buying additional licences when using a non-standard app to build and operate a solution.

Another benefit of using the Microsoft stack is that skills are readily available. There is no need for exclusive skill sets that you must buy in at a massive expense. Plus, there is no need to write documentation to retrain people, because they are already familiar with Microsoft. Users log in as they normally would daily.

Phase two of the app is usable on all devices, including mobile and tablet, ensuring police colleagues can enter details while in the field or at their desks.

Dave Brewster

National Operation Hampshire Co-ordinator

Dave Brewster is a former MPS Chief Inspector now working with the National Police Wellbeing Service (Oscar Kilo) as the national Operation Hampshire Co-ordinator.

A game-changer for policing

The Police Assaults and Injuries App can be game-changing in the way we understand the realities of what's happening to our colleagues on the front line.

In policing, there are so many different priorities, and the only people who can deliver those priorities – our people – should be our overarching priority. Police colleagues everywhere face growing levels of violence and aggression while delivering the priorities and, until we really understand what is happening to them, we cannot improve the situation for them, their families and the profession.

The data collected through this app will provide unprecedented insight into the real-world situation, enabling the necessary informed decisions to be made to look after our most important asset – our people.

It's not just about injury, it's about impact as well. Around 70% of the assaults nationally don't result in injury. That doesn't mean you should dismiss them. We need to understand the effects of repeat victimisation on police officers and police staff so that we can understand what it does to an individual when they repeatedly face violence, whether they are injured or not. After all, the mental impact can be just as detrimental, if not more so.

When you've got officers that are assaulted three or four times in a year, it's important that we understand why it's happening to them and what we can do to minimise the impact of it?

For me, it's all about information. This app, thanks to the ease of use of Microsoft's technology, makes it easier to collect the information that paints a clearer, wider picture. It makes data easy to export and display in a dashboard or through Microsoft Power BI. It enables data to be separated, meaning that if you are only interested in police officer assaults that have happened in the custody area, for example, while also providing that national dataset.

With the anticipated widespread adoption of this second-generation Police Assaults and Injuries App, we can take our understanding to a new level – for the good of everyone in policing, their families and the communities we serve.

We make digital perform for policing

Before digital can transform tomorrow, it must perform today. We're committed to delivering solutions that improve lives right now.

[Discover more](#)

For over 20 years, we've partnered with organisations across the public sector to help them unlock the potential of digital technology. Together, we transform the public sector by giving back time, improving citizen, customer and patient experiences and delivering integrated systems. Make digital work for your organisation by contacting us today.

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