



**101**

**The single non emergency number (SNEN)**

**A new service for local people**

# 101 – the single non emergency number (SNEN) A new service for local people

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## What is 101?

101 is a new non-emergency number introduced in July 2006 by the Northumbria Partnership. The Partnership is made up of Northumbria Police, Northumbria Police Authority and all the twelve local councils across Northumberland and Tyne and Wear.

The new service provides one, easy to remember number people can call for advice, information and action on community safety and anti-social behaviour issues.

It will improve response times to these issues, provide people with better access to services and free up the 999 service to handle emergency incidents.

At the moment, many people call 999 because they do not know who else to call. It is estimated that around 70% of calls to the police are not emergencies.

## Why have we introduced 101?

We want to make sure people go to the right place the first time. 101 provides:

- **Better access to non-emergency services** – more people will know first hand who to call.
- **Better delivery of non-emergency services** – 101 will be more effective and efficient. Calls will be better targeted so the relevant organisation will be able to deal with the issue promptly and effectively. If we can't help, people will be directed to the right organisation who can.
- **Increased confidence in public services** – people will know what to expect from 101, the police and their council
- **Improved 999 emergency services** – police will be able to focus on emergencies

The Northumbria Partnership put in a bid to the Government to be one of the first in the country to offer 101.

This means we are leading the way to develop the service to suit local people, rather than having to introduce 101 after it has been tried and tested by others.

All partners were consulted before agreeing to take part; it was important that all the local councils and the police agreed with the proposals before we went ahead with the bid.

## What 101 offers.

At first, 101 will focus on community safety, and anti-social behaviour and will cover eight main areas:

- **Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage**
- **Noise nuisance** – like noisy neighbours or burglar alarms
- **Intimidation and harassment** – like verbal abuse or neighbour disputes
- **Vehicle related ASB** – like abandoned vehicles or mini motos
- **Rubbish and litter** – like fly tipping or dead animals

- **Drunk and rowdy behaviour** – like drinking in unlicensed premises or games in inappropriate places
- **Drug related ASB** – like discarded needles or youths smoking cannabis
- **Street lighting** – like broken lights

These areas were chosen in consultation with a wide group of people from the partner organisations and the general public. We will probably add more services as 101 develops.

## Where and when is 101 available?

The Northumbria Partnership is among the first of five in the country to introduce 101 in the summer of 2006.

It will provide the new service to around 1.4million people over an area of 2,200 square miles.

Other partnerships across England and Wales are

- Hampshire and the Isle of Wight
- Cardiff
- Sheffield
- Leicester and Rutland

It will be available throughout England and Wales by 2008

## The Northumbria Partnership

The Northumbria Partnership is made up of 14 organisations;

- Northumbria Police
- Northumbria Police Authority
- Sunderland City Council
- Newcastle City Council
- Gateshead Council
- North Tyneside Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Northumberland County Council
- Alnwick District Council
- Berwick upon Tweed Borough Council
- Blyth Valley Borough Council
- Castle Morpeth Borough Council
- Tynedale Council and
- Wansbeck District Council

We were given the opportunity to help lead the way for the rest of the country because of our experience and reputation for good customer service, call handling and service delivery.

It is the only partnership that includes a number of '**Call Taking Partners**' – organisations who have fully trained advisers, ready and equipped to take calls – across different centres rather than one single contact centre.

These Call Taking Partners are Northumbria Police, Sunderland City Council and Newcastle City Council. The Police and Sunderland will provide a round-the-clock response while, at the beginning, Newcastle will respond during normal opening hours.

Gateshead and South Tyneside councils will watch closely how we progress and decide whether to do the same.

All partners are '**Service Delivery Partners**' who will actually deliver the relevant services to their residents, businesses and visitors.

Other police authorities and councils across the country will learn from us how we introduced 101 so they can bring in the new service themselves over the next eighteen months.

## How does 101 work?

The service will operate round-the-clock with specially trained 101 Advisers (the people actually taking the calls) giving information and advice where needed. Where necessary, they will arrange for further action to be taken by the police and/or relevant local council within the partnership area.

When a service isn't delivered 24/7, for example cleaning up graffiti, callers will be told when they can expect it to happen in line with what their local council or the police has promised. They will also be given a reference number and can call back to check the progress if they want to.

If an issue is not covered by 101, people will be directed to someone who can help.

## How will people know who to call?

The introduction of 101 will help take away any confusion about which agency or organisation to call about particular issues.

All the marketing and publicity planned to promote the new service will help people decide whether to call:

- 101
- 999
- their local council, or
- another support agency or organisation

## Other similar services

101 will not replace existing direct dial customer service numbers, but will complement them. Eventually, depending on the success of 101, these may be absorbed into the new service.

Partners will still be able to promote their own services as normal, but can add the fact they now also offer 101.

It also gives people more choice – they can still call current customer service numbers, 101 or, if it is an emergency 999.

## Different communities – how will they use the service?

We are developing ways to communicate with people who don't speak English and a translation service is available when people call.

At first 101 will be offered as a phone service alone, but will eventually be expanded for text and email too. This might help people who have different needs or prefer to use typed systems rather than speaking to someone on the phone.

## What will calls cost?

People will pay a maximum of 10p per call. That is a flat rate regardless of how long the call is. The Government consulted with people on charging, and research showed that a small, fixed charge would not put people off calling 101 and would help stop people making bogus calls.

In many cases, 10p is cheaper than calls to existing police and local council non-emergency numbers.

The charge goes toward providing the service, not to the police or councils.

The Government intend to review the charge once the service is up and running and it will be evaluated with the aim of making it free.

## **How will the technology work?**

We have had a brand new system specially developed for 101. The web-based programme is easy for 101 advisers to use after training. It will also be easy for future partnerships across the country to use if they want to adopt our system when introducing 101.

Eventually, all partners will have the opportunity to join their own Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system (the technology used to manage information about customers and the services they need from us) with our new 101 system.

Calls will be recorded for training, quality monitoring and public safety issues.

## **How will this reflect on performance?**

The partnership organisations will be able to use information provided by 101 to change services, target them more effectively and improve performance.

There may be an increase in the reporting of crime and anti-social behaviour. This will simply show that people are using services more because they have better access due to 101, and not that things are getting worse.

The British Crime Survey will continue to be the benchmark of actual crime levels (as opposed to only those reported) across the country, and councils will still benchmark services using Best Value Performance Indicators.

## **Finding out more**

There is a useful website that gives general information about 101;

**101.gov.uk**

For more information about the Northumbria Partnership email:

**info@northumbria-snen.co.uk**

**If you don't want it, 101 it!**