



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

Essex Police

The area covered by Essex Police experiences relatively lower levels of both anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime, per head of population.

Our ASB review

In Spring 2010, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out a review of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales. This included asking victims about their experience of reporting ASB to the police, and inspecting the quality of the processes that forces use in tackling and responding to the problem.

Working with the Police Science Institute at Cardiff University, we then used these results to answer the question of how the police can best tackle ASB.

What works?

Forces have the best chance to give victims a good service if they do three key things:

- Brief all relevant officers and staff (including neighbourhood policing teams, officers who respond to emergencies and CID officers) regularly and thoroughly about local ASB issues;
- Regularly gather and analyse data and information about ASB places, offenders and victims in their area, and use this information to allocate resources to tackle the problems; and
- Provide their neighbourhood policing teams with the right tools and resources to tackle ASB, and then monitor the plans the teams put in place to resolve local ASB issues.

This is how Essex Police is performing in these areas.

Are all relevant officers and staff regularly and thoroughly briefed about local ASB issues?

Neighbourhood policing and response teams are effectively briefed each day on local ASB issues, including a detailed breakdown of the nature and location of all ASB incidents in their area over the past 24 hours. At these briefings, staff are directed to patrol where their presence is likely to reassure local communities and have most impact in reducing ASB. CID officers are also briefed on local ASB issues, but less frequently than neighbourhood policing and response teams.

Is the force using ASB information to target its work in tackling ASB?

The force monitors how well it is doing in tackling ASB at regular meetings. There is a particular focus on checking against the force's target to reduce the level of reported ASB incidents, but chief officers also monitor some of the highest risk repeat victims to ensure that these cases are being managed effectively. At a local level, there is more of a focus on understanding repeat victims and locations, so extra resources can be allocated to help resolve their problems. However there is little analysis of information on vulnerable victims, and this can affect the way in which resources are allocated and directed to support them.

Do neighbourhood policing teams have the right tools and resources to tackle ASB, and are the plans they put in place to resolve local ASB issues monitored?

Neighbourhood policing teams use a wide range of methods to tackle ASB such as the use of injunction powers and anti-social behaviour orders. However, the force does not currently have a consistent way for teams to implement these approaches as part of plans to solve long-term ASB problems. Different processes apply across the force and, because of this, the supervision of these plans is not as consistent as it could be. The force has recognised this and two projects are currently underway to introduce new systems to address the issue.

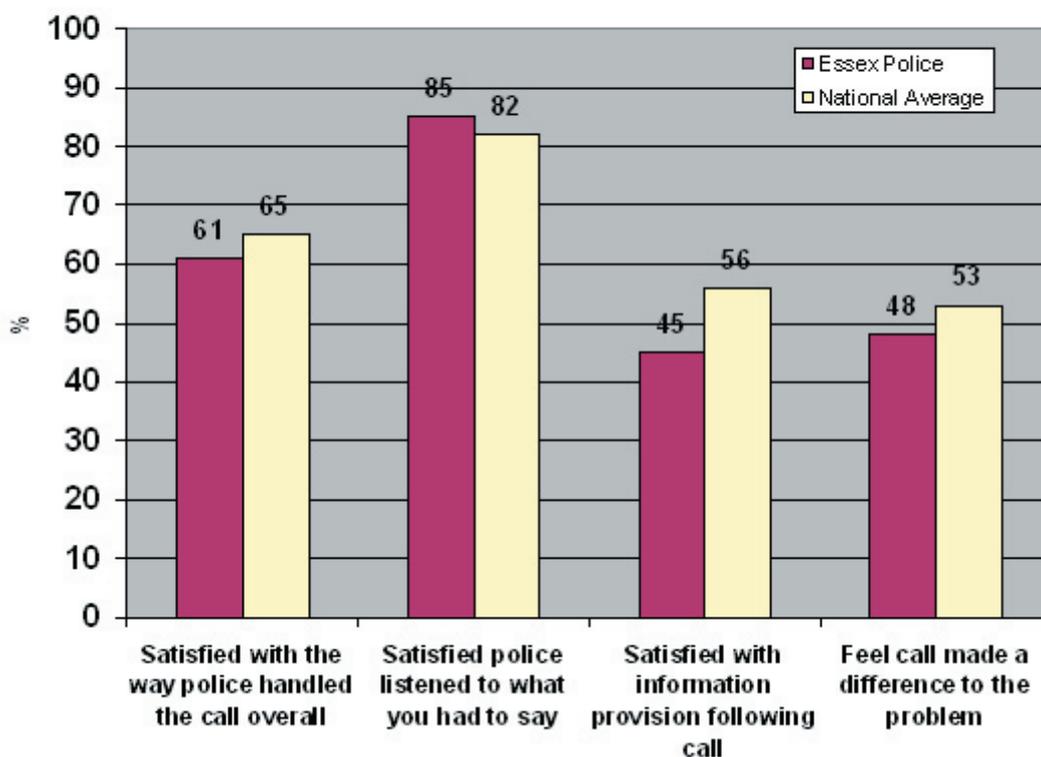
Is ASB a priority for the force?

ASB is a priority for the force and is included in the local policing plan. The level of police resources devoted to tackling ASB matches the force's commitment to treat ASB as a priority. The force ensures that information and intelligence on ASB is gathered, analysed and shared across the force. This is important, as it enables the force to respond better to areas of local concern and to take steps to prevent ASB in the first place.

Results of the victim satisfaction survey

We surveyed 107 people who reported ASB in Essex during September 2009. They were asked a range of questions about their perceptions of ASB generally and their experience in reporting ASB to the police.

Experience of reporting ASB



From the results, it can be seen that the force is performing broadly in line with the national average for the areas considered in the survey, although fewer of the victims surveyed in Essex were happy with the way in which the police provided information after they had called.

