



Inspecting policing  
in the public interest

## **Anti-social behaviour inspection report**

**Cleveland Police  
June 2012**

## About this review

In Spring 2010, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out a review to find out how the police can best tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB). We committed to repeating this inspection in 2012 to check on progress. This report tells you what we found in Cleveland; the 2010 review is available on the HMIC website ([www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)).

### What works in tackling ASB?

In 2010 HMIC found that forces have the best chance to give ASB victims a good service if they:

- **Identify if a caller is a vulnerable** (for instance, elderly or disabled) **or repeat victim** as soon as they call the police, so they can get extra support;
- **Brief all relevant officers and staff** regularly and thoroughly about local ASB issues;
- Regularly **gather and analyse data and information** about ASB places, offenders and victims, and allocate resources to tackle specific problems; and
- **Provide their neighbourhood policing teams with the right tools and resources** to tackle ASB.

This is how Cleveland Police is performing in these key areas.

# Findings for Cleveland Police

## Overview

There is a relatively high level of ASB recorded by Cleveland Police in comparison with the rest of England and Wales.

The force has continued to improve the way it deals with ASB since our 2010 inspection. It has introduced a new IT system and a standard set of four questions to help call handlers identify repeat and vulnerable victims as soon as they contact the police; and it also works well with partner agencies (like local authorities) to deal with ASB, with effective joint plans in place to tackle particular problems.

However, processes to consider the potential harm and risk to victims of ASB are not applied in the same way across the force; and plans to solve ASB problems are not always recorded consistently, or checked and signed off by supervisors.

HMIC is also concerned that our review of a sample of calls about ASB found that call takers were not consistently checking if the caller was vulnerable or had called before. This may mean that some victims are not getting the extra support they need. This is not, however, reflected in the results of a survey of ASB victims from the Cleveland Police area, which shows that they are broadly as likely to feel satisfied with the way ASB is dealt with in their area, and to feel the call they made to the force made a difference to the problem.

### **Are repeat and vulnerable victims effectively identified at the point of report?**

Cleveland Police has recently invested in new software to improve its ability to identify repeat or vulnerable victims. However, these new systems and processes are still being embedded; in the meantime, the force does not always identify such callers as soon as they contact the police.

HMIC also found that call handlers do not always ask targeted questions to determine whether the caller needed extra support, although the force system expects them to do this. During the inspection, we reviewed 100 calls about ASB, and found that the call handlers only asked targeted questions to help establish if a caller was a repeat victim on 57 occasions, and if he or she was a vulnerable victim in 27 cases.

## **Are officers and staff regularly and thoroughly briefed about local ASB issues?**

The force ensures neighbourhood policing teams, investigators and officers who respond to 999 calls are regularly briefed about local ASB issues. They are supported by IT systems which highlight ASB hotspots (where vulnerable and/or repeat victims and offenders are located), so that extra patrols can be concentrated in these areas. This represents progress since our 2010 inspection.

## **Does the force regularly gather and analyse data and information about ASB?**

Since our 2010 inspection, the force has continued to develop IT systems to improve the way it gathers and analyses data and information about ASB. The force holds regular meetings to review this information and to decide where best to allocate resources in order to tackle local ASB problems.

The force also regularly shares this analysis with other agencies (such as the local authority) through local Joint Action Groups, which aim to tackle particular ASB problems. The activities of these groups are influenced by the data and information provided by analysts, with access to various partnership agencies' data, making sure everyone is addressing the same repeat and/or vulnerable victims, locations and offenders and allocating their resources appropriately.

However, HMIC found that less serious incidents of ASB are not being rigorously or consistently managed by the force across all four policing districts.

## **Do neighbourhood policing teams have the right tools and resources to tackle ASB?**

Neighbourhood policing teams receive good support from the wider force to make sure they have the sufficient training and resources they need to tackle ASB. They use a wide range of tactics to deal with the problem. These include education and engagement in local schools, and high visibility patrols, often working jointly with partner agencies.

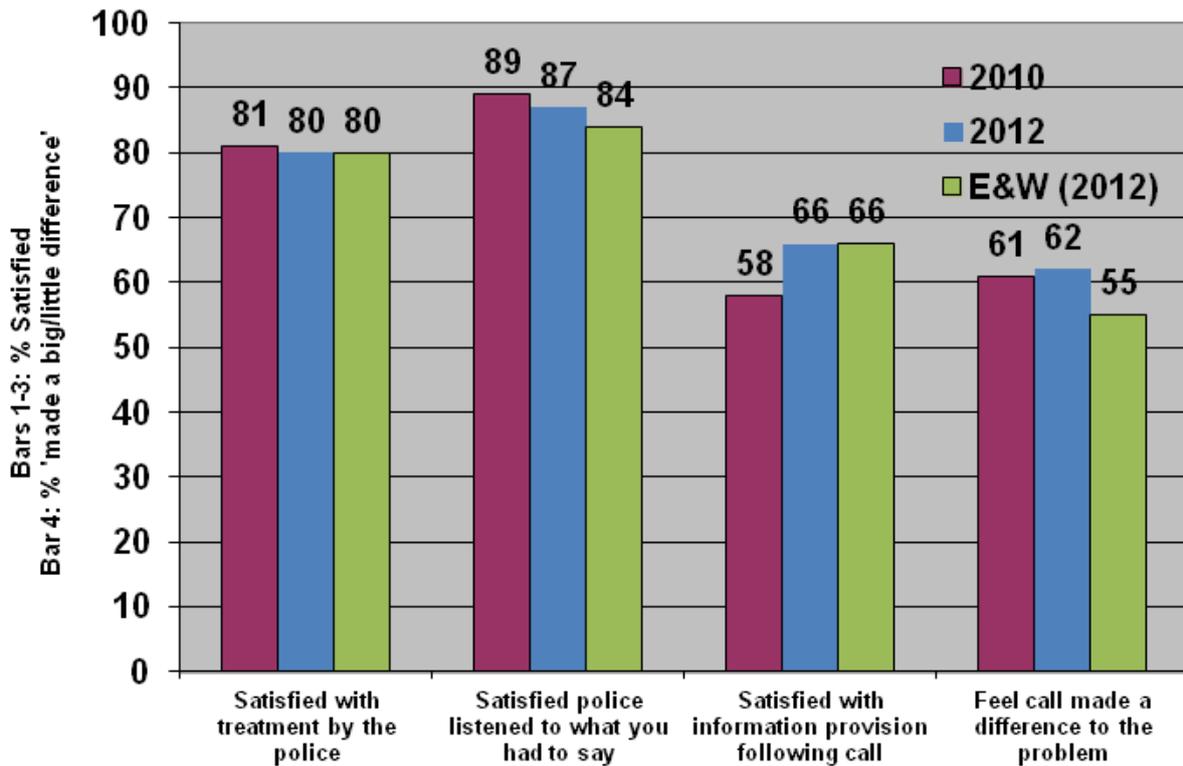
Staff develop plans to tackle specific ASB problems (again, often working in partnership with other agencies), and are supported in this by helpful IT systems. These plans are regularly reviewed to make sure they are having a positive impact on the problem, and are not signed off as completed without the approval of a supervisor.

However, HMIC found there was a lack of consistency as to where these plans were stored, making it difficult for them to be accessed by other staff in the force.

## Results of a survey of ASB victims

We surveyed 200 people who reported ASB to Cleveland Police during 2011. 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



This shows that Cleveland Police is performing broadly in line with the national average in these areas. This is a positive result for the force.

