



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

Devon and Cornwall Police

Devon and Cornwall experiences a relatively moderate level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and a lower level of 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 Devon and Cornwall Police is performing in these areas.

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

A new weekly 'tactical intervention' meeting is being established across the force to complement daily briefings to staff. It is effective at briefing CID, response and NPT staff about specific ASB issues and assigning activities to them. Information about ASB hotspots and offenders is particularly good. However, the force could focus more on briefing staff on repeat and vulnerable ASB victims, to ensure that their needs are met.

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

Daily management meetings and assessments that routinely identify ASB trends and issues help to review the latest information on some aspects of ASB. However, these methods could be stronger and there is not enough focus on using this information to allocate resources to solving the issues raised by repeat and vulnerable ASB victims.

The force has undertaken an assessment which includes prevention, enforcement and intelligence priorities for tackling ASB further, but it is unclear how progress is being monitored.

The force has developed a 'neighbourhood harm reduction register' that identifies residential locations which have generated three or more calls for police assistance in a three-month period. However, it does not explicitly identify whether the calls have been about ASB, and covers broader issues affecting the protection of vulnerable people, including mental health, drugs/alcohol and domestic abuse.

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?

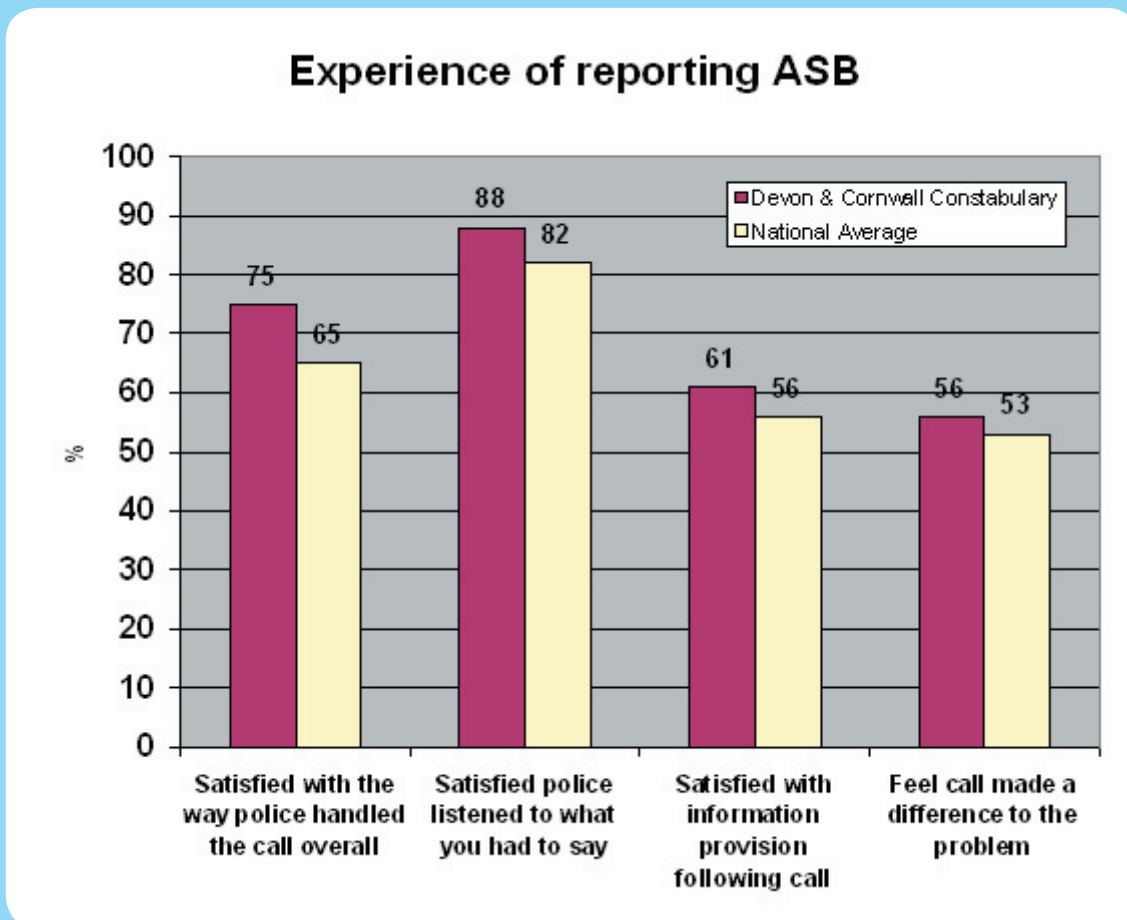
Neighbourhood teams have not recently been trained on how to solve long-term ASB problems, and so rely on local expertise and experience. HMIC found some good examples of staff working with partners, using various methods and approaches to tackle ASB, but the force would benefit from greater consistency in how it carries out these actions, and in stronger supervision of progress against plans.

Is ASB a priority for the force?

Tackling ASB is clearly a force priority and features in the policing plan and other relevant force documents. Considerable resources are devoted to tackling ASB. The force has included a specific anti-social behaviour theme in its work to increase public confidence and there has been a significant reduction in reported ASB over the last year with 13,190 fewer reports.

Results of the victim satisfaction survey

We surveyed 100 people who reported ASB in Devon and Cornwall 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.



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.

