



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Anti-social behaviour inspection report

**North Yorkshire 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 North Yorkshire; the 2010 review is available on the HMIC website (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 North Yorkshire Police is performing in these key areas.

Findings for North Yorkshire Police

Overview

There is a relatively medium level of ASB recorded by police in North Yorkshire in comparison with the rest of England and Wales.

HMIC found that the force has made little progress since 2010 in how it understands and tackles ASB. There are however some positives: it works well with partners, and is good at making follow-up contact with victims to update them on the progress of their case. The force recognised issues of quality assurance in the control room and has ensured remedial action. ASB is also identified as a force priority, with good oversight by the police authority and a specific ASB improvement plan. However, this plan is not owned at a senior level.

HMIC is concerned that staff are unclear as to what should lead to someone being categorised as a repeat victim, and that the control room do not always pass on relevant victim or incident history to officers responding to a call about ASB.

Safer neighbourhood team (SNT) staff are increasingly taken off their regular local duties and put on other tasks, with no policy or measurement in place to limit this. ASB incidents that are reported directly to staff on patrol (as opposed to by phoning 999 or 101) are not recorded consistently; and although there are 'toolkits' which outline the options available to help staff tackle ASB, these are not easily accessible. ASB information and plans to deal with particular problems are stored on various different systems, which makes it difficult to share good practice and innovative solutions. While some data is shared with partners (to help get a better picture of ASB across North Yorkshire), this is not done electronically, making effective analysis more difficult.

However, these issues are not reflected in the results of HMIC's survey of 201 people who reported ASB to the force in 2011. This showed that 64% surveyed were satisfied overall with the way the police dealt with ASB in the local area; and 73% were satisfied overall with the way the police dealt with the incident the last time they called. Both these figures are higher than the national figure.

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

The force's IT system identifies if a caller has previously been assessed as vulnerable or has been the victim of ASB before (by flagging up if the location matches an existing record). The call handler should also ask questions to establish if this is the case. However, when HMIC reviewed 100 calls made to the force about ASB, we found that the call taker asked about previous ASB on only 42 occasions; and the vulnerability of the caller was verbally checked on only 30 occasions.

The force uses different definitions of repeat victim for different issues, which is confusing for staff. This represents some deterioration from when we last inspected the force on this in 2010. With numerous definitions for repeat/vulnerable victims, the number of calls checked by supervisors has reduced and call takers do not always identify if an ASB incident relates to a known local problem.

HMIC acknowledges that the control room has undergone significant change. Newly appointed staff are currently being trained, and it is anticipated this should resolve some of the issues.

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

Investigators, response officers (who attend emergency calls) and SNT staff are briefed about ASB issues, typically at the daily management meeting (although this does not happen in all areas of the force). With briefings covering such wide geographical areas (e.g. Hambleton and Richmondshire) and varying shift patterns, the force relies on some staff self briefing; this can lead to a situation where not all staff are regularly briefed.

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

The force has carried out work at force and local level to understand what data partners have that may help them tackle ASB. Monthly ASB meetings take place with a number of partner agencies, chaired by the local authority.

The force regularly analyses data on ASB at force, Safer Neighbourhood Command (SNC), and SNT level, and uses this to identify what the problems are and how to deal with them at a number of different meetings (some of which are attended by partners such as the local authority). Partnership engagement is effective with information sharing working on an informal basis where local working arrangements are in place. ASB is clearly a priority area.

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

Relevant staff are equipped and resourced to deal with ASB, and provided with training on the tools and powers available to help them do this. There are 679 staff registered for the Chartered Management Institution level 3 qualification in neighbourhood management; 90% have completed the qualification, particularly SNT staff who primarily tackle ASB.

However, HMIC found that staff of all ranks are regularly taken off their local duties and put in other areas: but the force does not monitor this, or work to limit it. There is due to be a review of the current shift patterns which may resolve this issue.

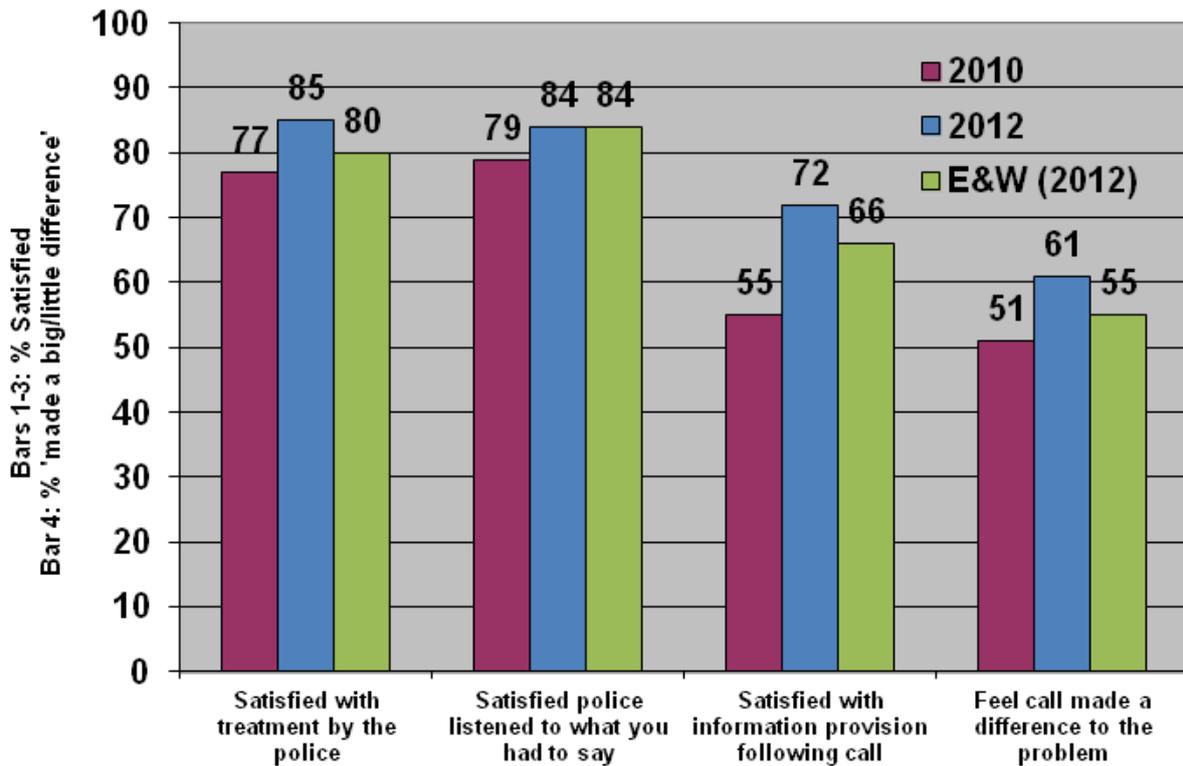
Supervisors are aware of plans in place to tackle long-term ASB issues, but do not track or monitor them consistently. The number of plans in place makes it difficult to provide effective oversight; however, some supervisors do succeed in doing so as a matter of course (for instance, where partners have ownership and in certain SNCs).

HMIC found that inconsistency is spread throughout the force because the plans are stored in a number of different IT systems. A review is ongoing to include all toolkits and plans in one easy accessible database.

Results of a survey of ASB victims

We surveyed 201 people who reported ASB to North Yorkshire 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



These results show that the force is performing broadly in line with the national average in these areas, and that the percentage of respondents who were satisfied with the information received from the police following their call has significantly increased since we last asked about this (in 2010). This is a good result for the force.