



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

Northamptonshire Police

The area covered by Northamptonshire Police experiences relatively higher levels of crime, per head of population, and moderate levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB).

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 Northamptonshire Police is performing in these areas.

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

Neighbourhood policing teams are regularly and effectively briefed on ASB, and response team briefings also include information about local ASB issues. However, CID officers are not routinely made aware of ASB issues, although they do attend meetings at which it is decided where police resource should be allocated to address specific issues, including ASB.

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

The force holds regular meetings to monitor how well it is doing in tackling ASB at a local level. However, the focus is currently on the number of reports in an area, rather than on addressing the specific needs of repeat and vulnerable victims. The force has recently made changes to the way in which ASB incidents involving repeat and vulnerable victims are recorded and managed, which should help provide better information and intelligence. This in turn should mean that police resources can be targeted to support victims and to provide a better service overall.

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. They work closely with the joint police and local authority ASB units that are established across the force to address ongoing ASB problems. While neighbourhood officers work effectively with their local partners to develop plans for addressing long-term ASB issues, across the force a number of different methods are used to record and manage these plans. The lack of a single system means that effective supervision of the response to ASB problems is harder to achieve. It also makes analysis of ASB trends and patterns more difficult. Without a full picture of ASB in their area, neighbourhood staff may not always be able to provide the most effective response.

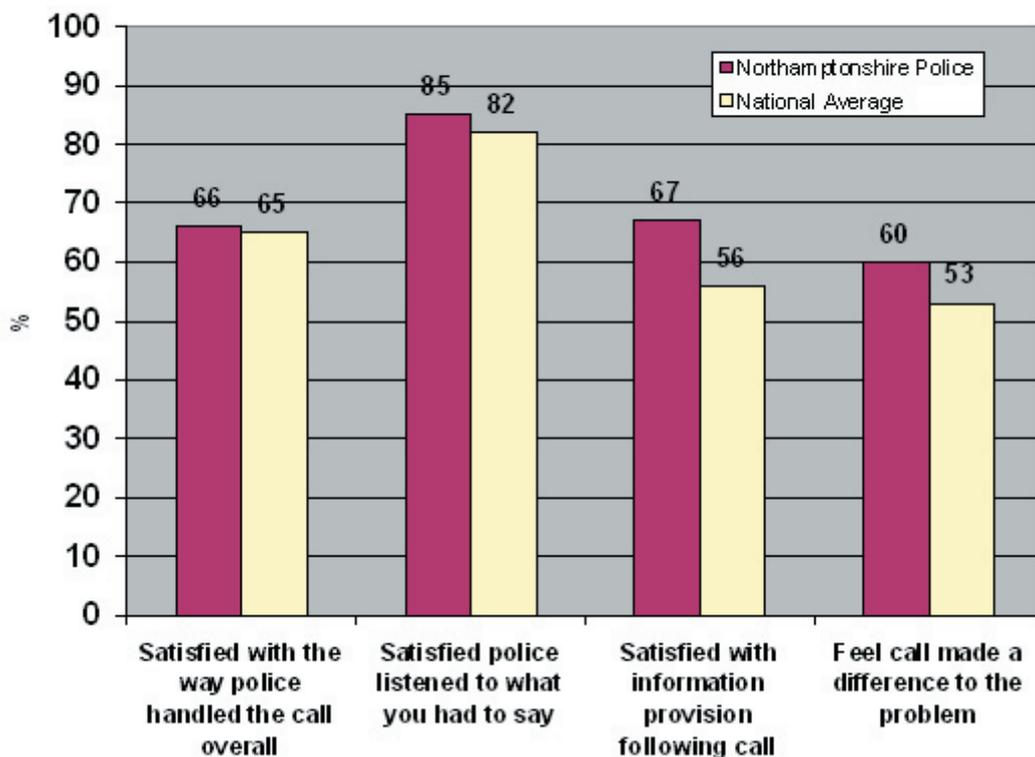
Is ASB a priority for the force?

ASB has recently been adopted as a force priority and features in the local policing plan. Not all staff were aware of this, but the level of police resources devoted to tackling ASB matches the force's commitment to treat it as a priority. The force is increasingly ensuring that information and intelligence on ASB is gathered, analysed and shared across the force. This is important as it will enable 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 102 people who reported ASB in Northamptonshire 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. It is doing particularly well in terms of victim satisfaction with the way in which the police provided information after they had called.

