



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

**Warwickshire Police  
June 2012**

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# 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 Warwickshire; 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 Warwickshire Police is performing in these key areas.

# Findings for Warwickshire Police

## Overview

There is a relatively low level of ASB recorded by police in Warwickshire in comparison with the rest of England and Wales.

HMIC found that Warwickshire Police has made some progress since 2010 in the way it understands and deals with ASB problems. It has strong arrangements in place to work with partners (such as councils and housing associations) to tackle ASB, with regular meetings at which they decide jointly where resources can best be allocated. These partnerships have also invested in dedicated ASB staff within the district councils who have an overview of ASB across the county, and can advise on the best way to tackle particular problems. The force also has a number of dedicated ASB police and community support officers (PCSOs) who provide advice and support to all Warwickshire police staff on ASB matters. The force consulted widely with partners about a new ASB policy aimed at strengthening its approach to dealing with the problem (which focuses on the needs of the victim): this is currently being piloted within the Warwick district.

However, the force does not consistently identify at the first point of contact vulnerable victims and callers who have previously called about ASB. Performance management and analysis of ASB could be strengthened at a strategic level and the force would benefit from conducting a force-wide ASB profile to enable it to fully understand the risks of harm caused by ASB. Further investment is required into staff training in the identification and response to ASB incidents.

When we surveyed ASB victims in Warwickshire, 49% were satisfied with the way that the problem was dealt with by the police in their local area. When asked about the last time they made a call to report ASB, 53% were satisfied with the way that the police dealt with them, which is below the national figure; 75% were satisfied with how the police handled the call. This is also lower than the national average but a significant improvement on the 2010 survey results of 52%.

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

Warwickshire Police's IT systems can identify callers who have telephoned before. Call takers use further questioning to establish if a caller is vulnerable. Call takers assess the risk of harm to the caller following these questions and then a decision is made how best to respond. Call takers have access to live-time 24/7 intelligence from staff located within the control room. Within the Warwick District ASB pilot area, staff attending ASB incidents are required to complete a risk assessment with the victim. This is then stored within the force command and control system. These risk assessments can be found quickly so a better service can be provided to the victim.

However, we reviewed 100 calls about ASB and found that the call handlers only asked specific questions to establish if a caller had been a victim on a previous occasion 47 times. Call handlers verbally checked the vulnerability of the caller on 12 occasions.

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

Safer neighbourhood team (SNT) staff brief themselves using the force's electronic briefing tool at the start of their duty and review all ASB incidents that have happened in their area in the previous 24 hours. Neighbourhood policing staff and ASB PCSOs are committed to providing a high quality of service to their communities and victims of ASB incidents. Investigators deal with most of those who are arrested within Warwickshire and are therefore aware of those persons brought into custody for ASB offences.

However, while response teams had access to the same electronic briefing and tasking IT systems, we found opportunities to improve on the briefing provided by supervisors.

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

The force meets regularly with partners to exchange and share data. There are strong partnership arrangements in place at all levels within the force and more recently a strategic approach has been agreed across the county where all partners use a new vulnerability and risk assessment matrix when identifying victims, offenders and locations of ASB.

However, the force has not carried out its own up-to-date force-wide ASB profile for some time. As a result, the force does not have a clear understanding of the size and scale of the problems posed by ASB for communities in Warwickshire. It is difficult to check how effective the force has been in dealing with ASB as updates of low and medium risk ASB cases are recorded in an inconsistent way.

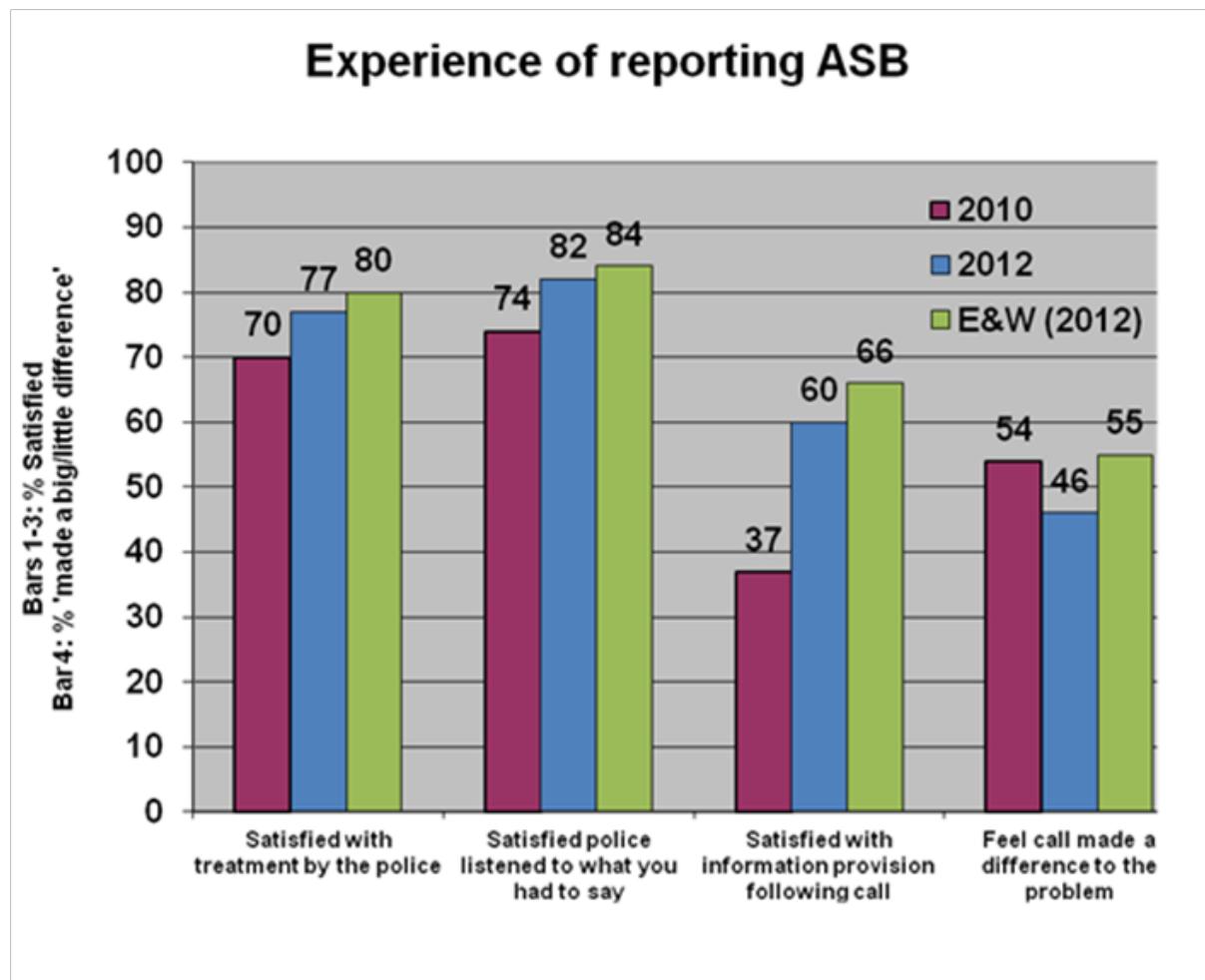
## **Do neighbourhood policing teams have the right tools and resources to tackle ASB?**

The force has invested in ASB PCSOs who act in a coordinating role with partners, providing knowledge and expertise to all other staff within Warwickshire Police. Additional training has been provided to all SNTs and all members of the Special Constabulary. A toolkit of practical options to deal with ASB incidents has been provided by the force and is easily accessible to all. Electronic risk management plans, overseen by a supervisor, are in place for all high risk ASB cases in the Warwick district pilot area. There is clear ownership within the partnership meetings of problem-solving plans and the updates from partners to these plans are reviewed prior to closure.

While the SNT staff are aware of the full range of options available to tackle ASB, this did not apply to all other members of staff. Supervisors are aware of long term problem-solving plans for ASB but are not tracking or monitoring these plans consistently.

## Results of a survey of ASB victims

We surveyed 200 people who reported ASB to Warwickshire 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.



These results show that the force is performing broadly in line with the national average in these areas, with one exception: the percentage of respondents who felt that their call had made a difference to the problem is significantly lower than average. However, the number of respondents who were satisfied with the information the police provided after their call has significantly increased since we last asked about this in 2010.