



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

Wiltshire Police

Wiltshire experiences a relatively lower 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 Wiltshire Police is performing in these areas.

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

Response and NPT staff keep themselves up to date about ASB issues. As information about ASB is not provided in a single place on the force computer system, many staff use their own initiative either by trawling the IT system for it, or sharing their knowledge of current problems by word of mouth. In some areas, officers and PCSOs are supported by volunteers who, in the absence of effective systems and analysis, prepare summaries of ASB issues to save other staff time. Staff morale is particularly good and there are positive attitudes and there is good cooperation between NPTs and response teams across the force, although CID officers do not routinely attend briefings.

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

ASB performance is managed by analysing data and information about ASB to identify problem areas. Information about ASB offenders and hotspots is used at management meetings, at which decisions are made about where police resource should be allocated. However, information about repeat or vulnerable victims is not routinely included.

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?

NPTs generally use their computer systems to manage their plans to tackle particular ASB problems, especially when these problems had been identified by their neighbourhood as a policing priority. HMIC found some detailed plans to tackle long-term ASB issues in some areas, particularly Swindon and Salisbury. One example involves a detailed plan to tackle, with several partners, the seasonal increase in ASB during half-term, Halloween and bonfire night.

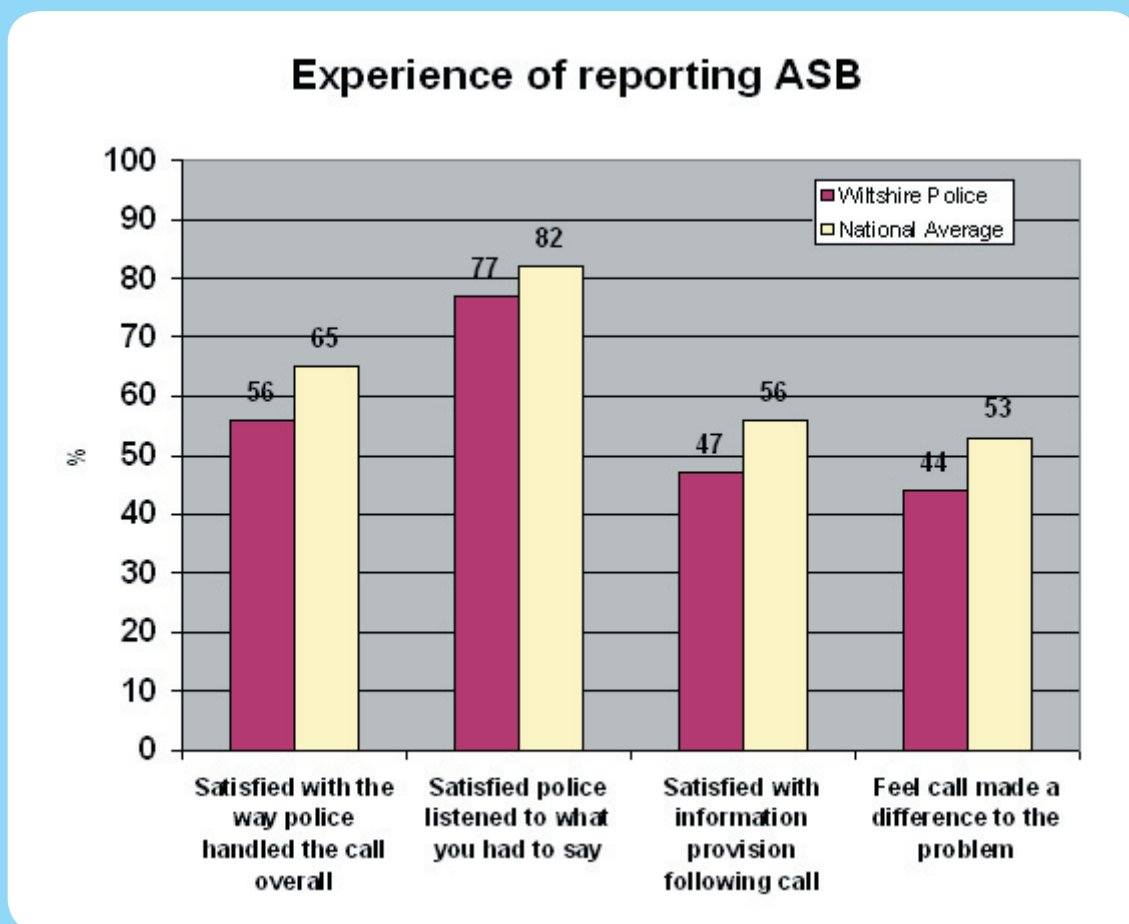
The force has a new approach which helps it to decide what tactics to use for dealing with a particular ASB problem. It is used throughout the county and is intended to build community confidence. This is widely used as the main approach to tackle ASB and other issues, but the formal system was used less in some areas. Progress against plans was monitored reasonably well by use of the ASB computer system, particularly in Swindon. It uses a colour-coded system to identify cases that should receive a priority response; this method resulted from a staff suggestion. However, in some areas the system was not used at all.

Is ASB a priority for the force?

ASB is a force priority and features in the policing plan. Public expectations of tackling ASB in Swindon are high, and the commitment from partners is strong. However, this commitment by partners is not as evident in Wiltshire County (ie not including Swindon). In terms of the level of resources devoted to ASB and the data and information gathered and analysed, the level of commitment to tackling ASB is becoming clearer.

Results of the victim satisfaction survey

We surveyed 103 people who reported ASB in Wiltshire 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.

In addition to the above results, about half of victims felt that ASB was a big problem in their area, significantly fewer than the national average. This is a good result for the force.

