



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

**Avon and Somerset
Constabulary**

Avon and Somerset experiences a relatively moderate level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and a moderate 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 Avon and Somerset Constabulary is performing in these areas.

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

HMIC found evidence that information about ASB locations and offenders formed part of the daily briefing process for response and safer stronger neighbourhood team staff (SSNs, the Avon and Somerset Constabulary term for neighbourhood policing teams). However, this briefing needs to be expanded to include information on repeat and vulnerable ASB victims. Other relevant staff, including CID officers, should be more involved in these briefings.

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

ASB performance is managed at force and local levels by analysing ASB data and information to identify problem areas; but currently, there is only a limited ability to identify repeat and vulnerable ASB callers in a comprehensive and consistent way. The force has recognised that its intelligence system focuses on ASB offenders and locations (rather than victims). New methods are being put in place to improve the way information about ASB victims is managed, so that resources can be targeted to better meet their needs.

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?

Tackling ASB is a top priority for the force and this commitment is set out in its own 'gold service' standard of which guidance on how to solve long-term ASB problems is a key element. This outlines the requirement for a clear set of activities – such as enforcement, targeting, intelligence gathering, victim care and partnership activity – in plans to solve problems. These procedures could be strengthened if the plans were more victim focused from the start, meaning they would be applied more consistently throughout the force. There are some good examples of police staff working with partners to use a variety of different methods for tackling ASB. One example is a joint operation to reduce youth ASB offending

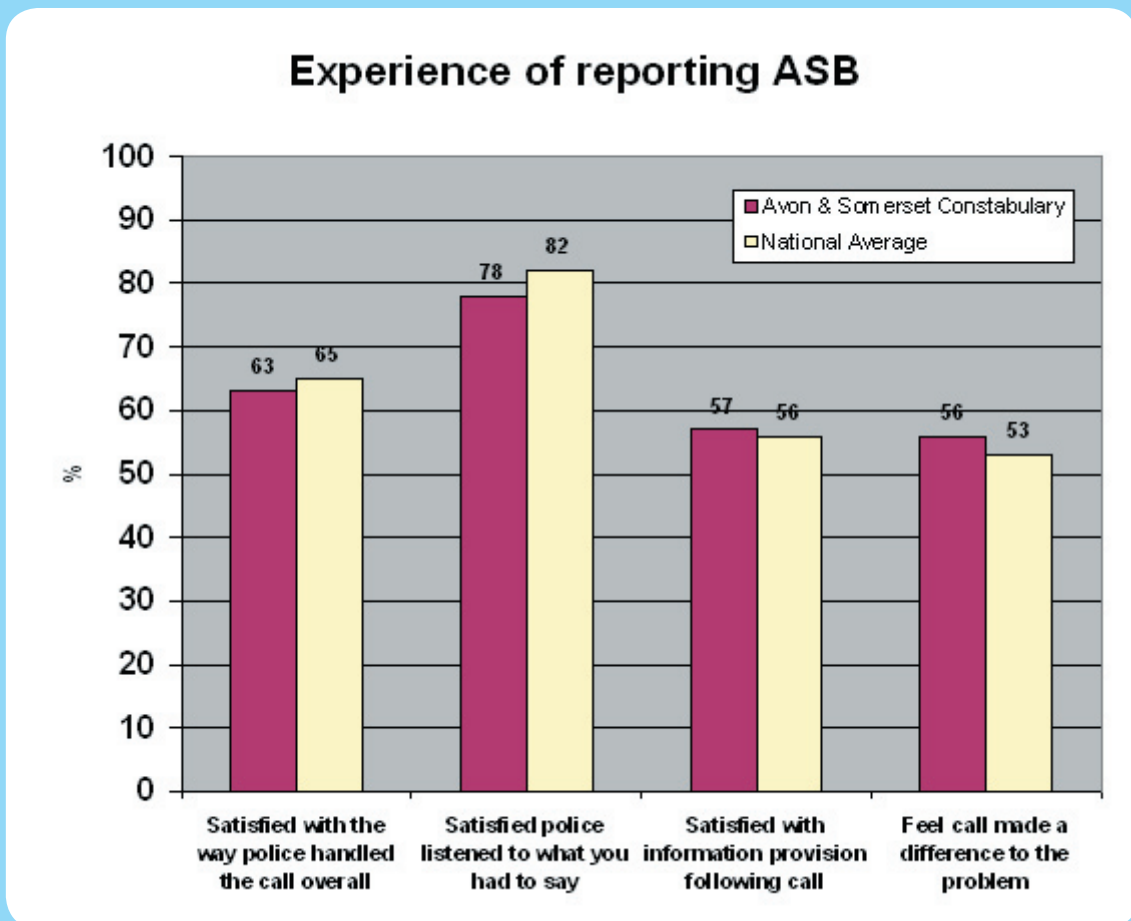
at a local beauty spot in Portishead, using prevention, education and enforcement activities. This has resulted in positive media coverage. A new system for managing cases is being introduced across the force and will make the production and monitoring of actions across each of the local areas more efficient by replacing the variety of current methods.

Is ASB a priority for the force?

ASB is a clearly stated force priority and features in the policing plan, with associated targets and measures – quality of service for ASB incidents and keeping ASB victims informed. In terms of the level of resources devoted to ASB and the data and information gathered and analysed, commitment to ASB is very clearly set out in the force's 'ASB Gold Service Standard', which was introduced at the start of the year.

Results of the victim satisfaction survey

We surveyed 100 people who reported ASB in Avon and Somerset 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, over two thirds of those surveyed agreed that local services deal with ASB issues that matter locally. This is above the national average and is a good result for the force.

