



Bedfordshire Police has made little progress in how it tackles anti-social behaviour and is unable to consistently identify repeat and vulnerable ASB victims when they first contact the police.

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). The national findings were published alongside individual reports that outlined how successfully each force was dealing with the problem.

The results of a follow-up inspection published today found that Bedfordshire Police has made little progress since 2010 in the four key areas that are important if ASB victims are to receive a good service. While the force recognises the impact of ASB on its communities, it has, until recently, prioritised its resources to tackle serious and acquisitive crime. As a result the force is reporting a strong reduction in overall crime, and it is committed to ensuring that future improvements in its response to ASB mirror the improvements it has achieved in driving down crime.

In May 2011, the force introduced a new protocol and IT system to help identify more consistently if someone contacting them to report ASB is vulnerable (for instance, disabled) or has called before. Local police officers then contact all ASB victims within 24 hours to carry out further assessment of whether the caller is particularly at risk, and so in need of extra support. However, HMIC found that despite these improvements repeat and vulnerable callers are still not always identified at the first point of contact (although the force is working hard to correct this).

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Eastern Region, Zoe Billingham, said:

“Anti-social behaviour is a blight that can wreck lives and communities. Our review shows that Bedfordshire Police has made little progress in tackling ASB since 2010, and our survey of ASB victims in Bedfordshire shows that satisfaction levels are below the national average in three of the four important areas which is a poor result for the force.

“In addition, the force cannot automatically and consistently identify repeat and vulnerable callers when they first contact the police, meaning that some victims do not receive the support they need. Bedfordshire Police must work to improve in these areas.”

The full report for Bedfordshire Police, along with the national thematic review ‘A Step in the Right Direction’, can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk

Notes to editors

1. The full thematic report 'A Step in the Right Direction' and supporting material can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk
2. The review 'Stop the Rot' published in September 2010 and the accompanying force reports can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk
3. For further information, or to request an interview, HMIC's press office can be contacted during office hours from 8:30am – 5:30pm Monday – Friday on 0203 513 0600.
4. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the effectiveness of police forces and authorities to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects and regulates all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies such as the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the British Transport Police and HMRC.
5. HMIC's out-of-hours press office line for urgent media enquiries is 07836 217 729.