



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

**Gwent Police  
June 2012**

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

# Findings for Gwent Police

## Overview

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

HMIC found that the force has made some progress since 2010 in the way it understands and tackles ASB problems in Gwent. It has recently introduced a new procedure which helps to identify particular issues and send extra patrols to hotspots where incidents occur most regularly.

The chief officer team has made it clear that tackling ASB is a priority for the force. Staff across the force were found to be committed, resourceful and effective in responding to ASB-related issues. There was good evidence of effective partnership working and staff were generally well equipped to tackle ASB.

However, the force is still unable to consistently identify callers who are most at risk of harm from ASB (such as vulnerable victims and those who have called about a problem before). This means some victims may not be getting the extra support they need.

Because there is no effective ASB training programme, neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) are not fully aware of the most up-to-date options available to help them tackle ASB. HMIC also found that plans to deal with specific local problems are not well monitored to make sure that they are progressing as they should be.

When we surveyed ASB victims in Gwent, 52% were satisfied with the way that the problem is dealt with by police in their local area. This is in line with the national average. When asked about the last time they made a call to report ASB, 58% were satisfied with the way that the police dealt with the ASB. This is again in line with the national average.

The survey also showed that 58% were satisfied with the information provided by the police after the call, which is lower than the national average. However, 84% were satisfied with the action taken by the police (which is in line with the national average).

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

The force does not always identify if a caller is vulnerable or has called about ASB before. Rather than any automatic way of flagging up this information, the force relies on the staff who take the call searching through different IT systems to see if the victim has called before, and asking specific questions to determine if they need extra support.

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 32 times. Call handlers verbally checked the vulnerability of the caller on 13 occasions. Gwent Police has invested in new software to improve its call handling approach.

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

The force has invested in an IT system to identify ASB hotspots, so that they can send extra patrols to these areas. ASB is considered at tasking and coordinating meetings (where decisions are made about local priorities and where resources should be targeted); these meetings also consider vulnerability and mental health issues.

NPTs, investigators and officers who respond to emergencies are regularly briefed in detail at the start of their shift about recent ASB problems and trends, and specific local issues. However, this is not the case for control room staff, which means that they might not recognise if new calls relate to incident hotspots, or are from victims who either are known to be vulnerable or have rung about a problem before.

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

The force, together with its partners, employs specialist analysts who work to identify ASB hotspots, so they can direct extra police patrols to these areas. In addition, specialised Crime and Disorder Reduction Officers (CADROs) are based in some police stations in Gwent, and are able to access some information held by other agencies. This means they may be able to identify if a caller has previously made a report of ASB or is vulnerable, even if they have not directly contacted the police before. Regular meetings are held to analyse information about victims, offenders and locations in order to decide where best to allocate resources to tackle local ASB problems.

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

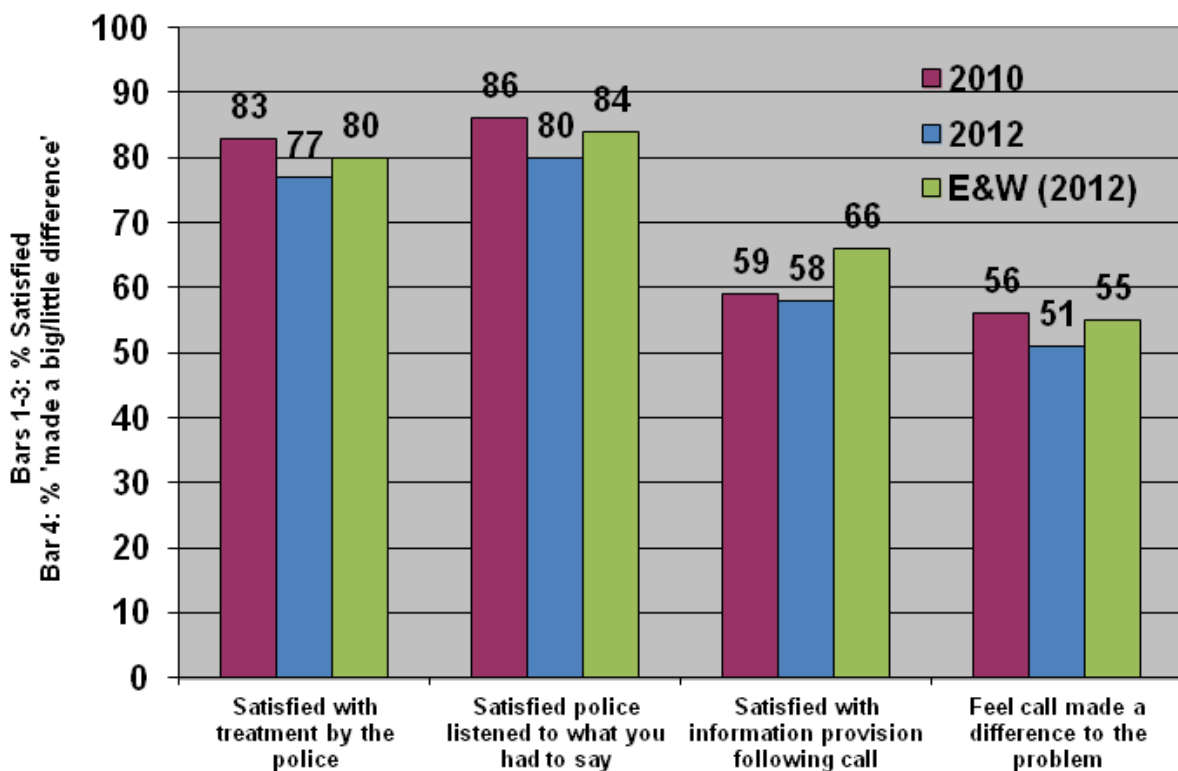
NPTs receive good support from the wider force. The Welsh Government has also provided extra funding to pay for an additional 101 full time Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). This will further boost the ability of teams to tackle ASB.

Neighbourhood teams make good use of planning to tackle specific ASB problems with partners and communities, although these plans are not regularly monitored to make sure they are progressing as they should be. We also found that not all neighbourhood staff are aware of the full range of options available to help them tackle ASB, and that some training material is out of date.

## Results of a survey of ASB victims

We surveyed 200 people who reported ASB to Gwent 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.

### Experience of reporting ASB



These results show that the force is performing broadly in line with the national average in three of these areas. However, the percentage of respondents in Gwent who were satisfied with the information provided by the police after their call is lower than the average.

