



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

Hertfordshire Constabulary

The area covered by Hertfordshire Constabulary experiences relatively lower levels of both anti-social behaviour (ASB) and 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 Hertfordshire Constabulary is performing in these areas.

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

Briefing on ASB to keep staff up to date on the latest local information is patchy and not standard practice across the force. Safer neighbourhood team staff are generally better informed, but response and CID officers are very rarely briefed on ASB problems in their area. A new intelligence system, to be implemented later this year, should help to improve the way in which local teams are briefed on issues of local concern.

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

The force has recently prioritised the collecting of information about ASB hotspots and offenders, although this is not yet in place in every part of the force. Once established, this will enable the force to be more effective in monitoring how well it is doing in tackling ASB. Where local ASB problems are highlighted, additional police resources are allocated to address the issue. However, this generally focuses on locations with high numbers of ASB incidents rather than on meeting the needs of vulnerable or repeat ASB victims.

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?

Safer neighbourhood teams use a range of methods to tackle local ASB issues such as anti-social behaviour orders and dispersal notices. Teams work well with partners to develop plans to address long-term ASB problems. However, not all plans are effectively monitored to ensure they are kept on track. The force recognises the need to develop a standard way of managing this so progress can be easily monitored.

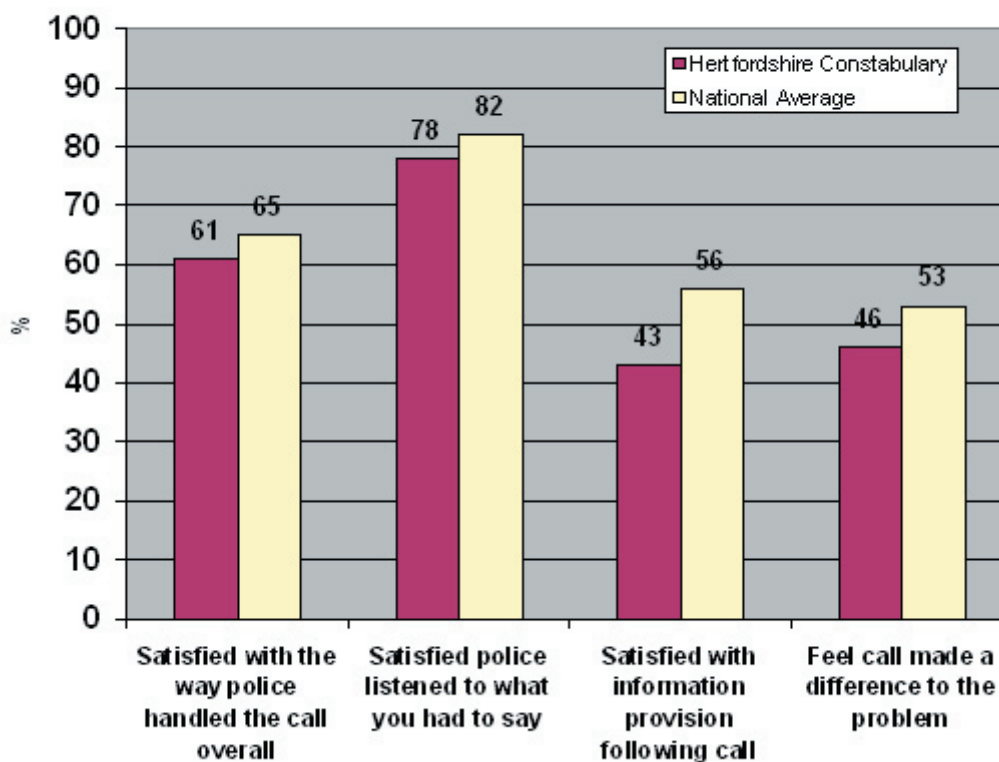
Is ASB a priority for the force?

The local policing plan identifies ASB as a priority and sets out clear targets to reduce ASB and alcohol related ASB. The level of resources devoted to tackling ASB matches the force's commitment to treat ASB as a priority. The force has recently improved the way in which information and intelligence on ASB is gathered, analysed and shared across the force. This is important as it will enable the force to respond better to areas of local concern and to take steps to prevent ASB in the first place.

Results of the victim satisfaction survey

We surveyed 101 people who reported ASB in Hertfordshire 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.

Experience of reporting ASB



From the results it can be seen that Hertfordshire is doing less well in the areas considered in the survey. The chart shows that victims surveyed in Hertfordshire were less satisfied with information provided by the police after they have called. Other survey results showed people were far less satisfied with the way they were treated by the police after reporting ASB.

