

Sussex Police has made progress in how it tackles anti-social behaviour, but does not consistently identify repeat and vulnerable ASB victims.

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 Sussex Police has made progress since 2010 in how it understands and tackles ASB problems. There are good examples of partnership working across the county, with some teams working closely with other agencies (such as local councils) to tackle ASB

The force has also recently introduced a set of questions for call takers to help them identify repeat and vulnerable victims. When these are used, victims receive a good level of service. However, Sussex Police is still working to improve the way it identifies these callers (who are most at risk of harm from ASB). This means that there can be delays in providing some of these victims with the extra support they need. Although the force has introduced a risk assessment process (which officers who respond to calls can use to help identify if a person is vulnerable), this is not always being used.

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 Sussex Police has made progress in how it tackles the problem, and that victim satisfaction is increasing and in line with the average for England and Wales. The force should be commended for this – especially as it comes against the backdrop of significant budget cuts across the Service.”

“However, while the progress the force has made so far represents another step towards delivering a much better service to victims, there is no room for complacency. In particular, Sussex Police should continue to work on making sure repeat and vulnerable callers are identified in a consistent way. This will help ensure those victims most at risk of harm from ASB get the extra support they need.”

The full report for Sussex 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.

HMIC found that the force has made some progress since 2010 in how it understands and tackles ASB problems. Our survey of ASB victims in Sussex shows generally high levels of satisfaction.

The force has recently introduced a set of questions for call takers to help them identify repeat and vulnerable victims. When these are used, victims receive a good level of service. There are also good examples of partnership working across the county, with some teams working closely with other agencies (such as local councils) to tackle ASB.

However, the force is still working to improve the way it identifies callers who are most at risk of harm from ASB, such as victims who may be vulnerable (because of their age or a disability, for example). This means that there can be delays in providing some of these victims with the extra support they need. Although the force has introduced a risk assessment process which officers who respond to calls can use to help identify if a person is vulnerable, this is not always being used.