



RESPONSE BY THE PCC TO HMICFRS INSPECTIONS OF CLEVELAND POLICE

INSPECTION DETAILS

Title of Inspection - The policing response to antisocial behaviour - PEEL spotlight report

Date Inspection Published - 10 October 2024

Type of Inspection: Cleveland Specific National
 Follow Up Thematic
 Partner Inspection

Is Cleveland Police quoted in the Report? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

Introduction

Antisocial behaviour is generally characterised as persistent, repeated incidents that increase in severity of incident or impact on victims over time. Antisocial behaviour makes people feel unsafe. It damages communities and it can destroy the lives of its victims. In the year ending 30 September 2023, about 1 million antisocial behaviour incidents were reported to the police. Each is potentially a cry for help from communities.

But antisocial behaviour is sometimes perceived, and referred to, as low-level crime by the police, the public and the media. This attitude does not reflect the significant impact it has on communities and on victims' lives, and the trauma sustained antisocial behaviour can cause - trauma that has led to loss of lives. Dealing with antisocial behaviour effectively needn't be complex. In many cases, effective early intervention can prevent incidents becoming more complex and difficult to resolve.

Several high-profile cases highlight the dangers of seeing anti-social behaviour incidents in isolation, rather than taking into account the cumulative effect that it has on its victims. In 2007, Fiona Pilkington took her own life and that of her disabled daughter Francesca Hardwick after prolonged harassment and multiple reports to the police. David Askew died of a heart attack in 2010, after a ten-year campaign of bullying and harassment. In 2020, a victim of 'cuckooing' - where criminals exploit vulnerable people to take over their home - was found dead in their flat in Camden. Before this, there had been several interventions from police and other organisations concerning antisocial behaviour and criminal activity.

This HMICFRS report focuses on the police response to antisocial behaviour and brings together findings from the Inspectorate's police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) programme, force management statements and a request for promising practice from the College of Policing to all forces in England and Wales.

Summary of Findings

Identifying and recording antisocial behaviour

When a victim of antisocial behaviour reports an incident to the police, it is essential that forces correctly identify it, assess the risk and then record the right crimes. In this chapter of the report, the HMICFRS sets out its findings on how well police forces identify and record antisocial behaviour:

- Most forces need to improve how they identify and record antisocial behaviour.

Recommendation 1

By 31 March 2025, forces should review their processes for recording antisocial behaviour to make sure all antisocial behaviour and associated crime are recorded correctly.

Recommendation 2

By 30 September 2025, forces should make sure personnel are appropriately trained to identify and record antisocial behaviour and associated crime when they are first reported.

- Forces need to improve how they identify and protect vulnerable people.

Recommendation 3

By 31 March 2025, forces should:

- review their risk assessment processes for antisocial behaviour cases to make sure that risks are properly assessed from initial contact to case closure; and
 - make sure completed risk assessments are retained in line with management of police information guidelines.
- Some forces make good use of technology to encourage antisocial behaviour reporting.

Using data to tackle antisocial behaviour

Officers and staff need to uncover the main causes of antisocial behaviour and problem-solve to find lasting solutions. In this chapter of the report, the HMICFRS sets out findings on how well police forces use data to deal with antisocial behaviour:

- Too many forces don't understand the prevalence of antisocial behaviour.
- A lack of analytical support undermines efforts to tackle antisocial behaviour effectively.
- Most forces are good at sharing antisocial behaviour data with partner organisations.
- Some forces need to address IT issues that prevent them using data effectively.

Problem-solving approaches

Problem-oriented policing is a structured approach to dealing with antisocial behaviour. In this chapter of the report, the HMICFRS sets out its findings on how well police forces use problem-solving approaches to tackle antisocial behaviour:

- Most forces make good use of problem-solving to tackle antisocial behaviour.
- Some forces need to do more to make sure problem-solving is integral to tackling antisocial behaviour.

Recommendation 4

By 31 December 2024, forces should:

- make sure all antisocial behaviour problem-solving plans fully specify the problem, contain sufficient detail, are effectively supervised; and
- evaluate all antisocial behaviour problem-solving plans for an outcome in line with National Police Chiefs' Council Neighbourhood Policing Outcome and Performance Guidelines.

Early interventions

Having a range of interventions to tackle antisocial behaviour is important because there are a range of behaviours that could be classified as antisocial. In this chapter of the report, the HMICFRS sets out its findings on how well police forces use early intervention approaches to deal with antisocial behaviour:

- Many forces use early intervention approaches to prevent antisocial behaviour.

Use of statutory powers

When early intervention fails to stop antisocial behaviour, there are several statutory powers and legal orders that the police and partners can use. In this chapter of the report, the HMICFRS sets out its findings on how well police forces use statutory powers and legal orders to tackle antisocial behaviour.

- Forces generally use statutory antisocial behaviour powers well to address antisocial behaviour.
- Forces don't always record the use of statutory powers.

Recommendation 5

By 31 October 2024, the Home Office should develop a set of requirements for a process to collect force data on the use of statutory antisocial behaviour powers for consideration by the Home Office Policing Data Requirement Group.

Recommendation 6

By 30 April 2025, if the set of requirements for a process to collect force data on the use of statutory antisocial behaviour powers is approved by the Home Office Policing Data

Requirement Group, and subject to ministerial approval, the Home Office, in collaboration with the National Police Chiefs' Council, should pilot the collection and analysis of data on the use of statutory antisocial behaviour powers on a voluntary basis.

Recommendation 7

By 30 April 2026, subject to the outcome of the pilot of the collection and analysis of data on the use of statutory antisocial behaviour powers, the Home Office should roll out a mandatory process for collecting, analysing and publishing data on the use of statutory antisocial behaviour powers for all forces.

Use of police resources to tackle antisocial behaviour

Longer-term problem-solving to reduce antisocial behaviour requires a deep knowledge of the local area and the attention of personnel who are comprehensively trained with the right skills and knowledge. In this chapter of the report, the HMICFRS sets out its findings on how well police forces use their resources to tackle antisocial behaviour.

- Forces are recognising that continuity within neighbourhood police teams helps tackle antisocial behaviour.
- Specialist antisocial behaviour advisers can help make effective use of antisocial behaviour powers.
- Police training on antisocial behaviour is inconsistent.

Recommendation 8

By 30 September 2025, forces should give all neighbourhood policing teams antisocial behaviour training that makes best use of the College of Policing's antisocial behaviour guidance and resources.

- Many forces share resources with other organisations to deal with antisocial behaviour.

Evaluating outcomes of antisocial behaviour interventions

Police forces need to understand what interventions have worked to reduce risk and prevent further antisocial behaviour. In this chapter of the report, the HMICFRS sets out its findings on how well police forces evaluate the effectiveness of antisocial behaviour interventions.

- Some forces need to improve how they evaluate outcomes.

Conclusion

This report focuses on the prevalence and harmful nature of antisocial behaviour and the importance of an effective police and partnership response to it.

The HMICFRS found some forces had invested in tackling antisocial behaviour, through good use of data, training, effective problem-solving with partners, and dedicated teams. But too many forces have neglected this important area of policing.

These forces need to do better, to help build safer, stronger communities.

Police forces should:

- collect the right data on antisocial behaviour and work with other organisations to share and understand their data;
- identify and record antisocial behaviour appropriately, including when it involves or is connected to crime;
- make sure they have enough suitably experienced personnel to analyse antisocial behaviour data and to provide expert guidance on tactics and legal powers to address antisocial behaviour, in partnership with other organisations such as local authorities when appropriate;
- use problem-solving approaches and plan interventions with other organisations that address the root causes of antisocial behaviour;
- make sure neighbourhood police teams remain focused on local issues, including antisocial behaviour, and aren't diverted from their main duties to carry out other work;
- make sure all relevant personnel receive appropriate training on antisocial behaviour and problem-solving approaches;

- record the use of formal and informal interventions, and assess how well interventions have worked, so that forces and other organisations can learn from previous experience; and
- make sure the public can access the antisocial behaviour case review process and that this process is effective.

The HMICFRS will continue to focus on antisocial behaviour in its police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections. The HMICFRS will also be monitoring progress against the recommendations made in this report.

FORCE RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

All new reports into the Force follow a specific process which involves informing the Governance of Audit and Inspection (GAIN) Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, of the report's publication and identifying an Executive Lead to monitor/drive progress of the actions going forward.

A plenary session with the Exec lead and relevant stakeholders is held to discuss the actions and agree how they will be progressed. The outcome from this session is reported back to the GAIN Board for acceptance and approval; progress is then monitored through governance meetings until such a time as the action is considered complete.

The process for closing actions is depicted by HMICFRS, as they award each action a level; the Force complies with the appropriate course of action, linked to this level, to formally close the actions.

The report included 5 recommendations for forces. These are recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 of those detailed above.

An Executive Lead (ACC Felton) and Delivery Lead (Ch. Supt. Sutherland) will be identified in the October GAIN meeting and a plenary session will be planned to discuss and delegate the individual recommendations. All actions will be progressed over the coming months with the support of the Executive lead.

The Force continues to actively work to satisfy all recommendations and AFIs which are discussed regularly in the relevant Force Governance meetings.

PCC RESPONSE TO INSPECTION

Comment by the PCC:

The PCC:

- recognises that anti-social behaviour is a priority for communities;
- understands that the risk and harm associated with antisocial behaviour can increase over time;
- acknowledges that effective early intervention can prevent incidents from becoming more complex and difficult to solve; and
- supports the HMICFRS's recommendations for improvement.

One of the PCC's policing priorities, as detailed in the Police and Crime Plan 2024-28, is to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and harm.

The PCC recognises the importance of effective problem-solving with partners and securing meaningful change when responding to and tackling antisocial behaviour.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is involved in delivering a range of projects and restorative practices to tackle anti-social behaviour, deter offenders and support victims. For example, the Safer Streets Fund and ASB Hotspots Project have both secured positive reductions in anti-social behaviour in Cleveland.

The OPCC will be hosting Cleveland Anti-social Behaviour Summit on Thursday 21 November 2024. Taking place during Antisocial Behaviour Awareness Week, the event is for strategic leaders and practitioners working to reduce anti-social behaviour across Cleveland's four districts (Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton). Those in attendance will hear from agencies involved in partnership projects proven to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour across Cleveland. A discussion will also take place on what more can be done to improve the lives of those affected by anti-social behaviour.

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