

6.1 People affected by environmental and neighbour related antisocial behaviour

Introduction

The Anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 defines Anti-social behaviour as:

- (a) Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person;
- (b) Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation or residential premises, or
- (c) Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a broad term used to describe the day-to-day incidents of crime, nuisance and disorder that make many people's lives a misery – from litter and vandalism, to public drunkenness or aggressive dogs and noisy or abusive neighbours. Such a wide range of behaviours means that responsibility for dealing with anti-social behaviour is shared between a number of partner agencies, particularly the police, councils and social landlords.

Victims can feel helpless, bounced from one agency to another and then back again. In many cases, the behaviour is targeted against the most vulnerable in our society and even what is perceived as 'low level' anti-social behaviour, when targeted and persistent, can have devastating effects on a victim's life.

Public consultation places ASB at the top of local priorities and the public sees ASB and minor incivilities as one end of a continuum leading to serious violence and homicide. ASB is also the most common priority chosen by Safe Neighbourhood Panels with whom the ward based police Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) consult. This illustrates its importance for local people and how it impacts on their perceptions of their safety.

To focus on the impact of ASB and support victims the partner agencies divide it into three categories known as the PEN approach:

Personal - designed to identify ASB incidents that the caller, call-handler or anyone else perceives as either deliberately targeted at an individual or group or having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large.

Types of behaviour that fall into this category include:

- Hate related incidents and crime
- Violence
- Criminal damage including arson
- Verbal abuse
- Harassment

Environmental - deals with the interface between people and places. It includes incidents where individuals and groups have an impact on their surroundings

including natural, built and social environments. Types of behaviour that fall into this category include:

- Street drinking
- Drug use and its effects.
- Trespass
- Nuisance from vehicles

Nuisance - those incidents where an act, condition, thing or person causes trouble, annoyance, inconvenience, offence or suffering to the local community in general rather than to individual victims.

Types of behaviour that fall into this category include:

- Noise Nuisance
- Drug dealing or cultivation of drugs
- Prostitution
- Criminal damage to public buildings
- Pets not being kept under appropriate control

Further to the PEN approach there are also two other sets of behaviours to be aware of:

1. Criminal behaviour which is also listed above will be dealt with as such but as a Partnership, LBBB may also use specific ASB tools and powers (including legal action) to reduce the effect of this behaviour on local communities.

Types of behaviour that fall into this category include:

- Drug dealing or cultivation of drugs
- Threat or actual use of violence
- Criminal Damage
- Hate Crime

2. Lifestyle issues which is unwanted behaviour and viewed as unacceptable by the person experiencing it (the complainant). LBBB does not consider behaviour in this category to be 'antisocial behaviour,' so legal action is unlikely to be appropriate, but services such as mediation are still offered to help resolve this type of complaint and to manage the complainants expectations.

Types of complaints that fall into this category include complaints about:

- Cooking smells
- Normal living noise, for example, hovering and other domestic chaos
- Children playing
- Fencing or boundary disputes
- Parking issues when there are no parking regulations being broken

6.1.1 Overview of Reported ASB Incidents to Partnership Services in 2015/16

With regards to Anti-Social Behaviour management, the most utilised partnerships between Council departments are those between the Housing Service, the Environmental and Enforcement Services, and the Community Safety Team.

When an Anti-Social Behaviour complaint is received by the Council, there are a number of departments that may be responsible for dealing with it, depending on the type of ASB complaint and who it is regarding. As each of these Council departments has different powers available to them, it is often the case that a multiagency approach will be used when dealing with more complex cases.

Antisocial behaviour complaints to the police and Council services have reduced year on year for the last 4 years. However there has been an increase in ASB complaints in the first months of 2016.

Using ASB incidents reported YTD (April – June 2016) and compared to the same point in the previous year (April – June 2015).

Overall, ASB incidents reported to services have increased by 7%. A breakdown of reports to each service is shown below:

Data source	Indicator	YTD June 2016	Comparison to the year before	% Change	Difference in ASB calls
Local Police CAD figures	Calls to the Police reporting ASB	1,575	1,361	+16%	214
Local figures from Capita System	Calls to the Housing reporting ASB	91	223	-59%	132
Local figures from Flare System	Calls to the Council ASB team and EE Services reporting ASB	1,296	1,180	+10%	116
Overall volume of incidents / calls received		2,962	2,764	+7%	198

Calls to Police:

ASB calls to the Police are up by 214 incidents (+16%). The Police CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) data shows that the increase has come from calls categorised as Nuisance calls (from 1,151 in Qtr 1 2015/16 compared to 1,361 in Qtr 1 2016/17).

The top 3 Nuisance ASB calls reported to the police are further categorised as Rowdy Inconsiderate Behaviour, Vehicle Nuisance / Inappropriate use, and Rowdy Nuisance Neighbours. The top 3 Nuisance calls are consistent with the previous year.

However, there has also been a large increase in the number of begging / vagrancy calls reported to the police (60, up 33). The data shows that the majority of these incidents are taking place in Barking. Repeat areas include the London Road multi storey car park (11 of the 60 incidents), Shell Garage in London Road (5 of the 60 incidents) and Bathhouse in Barking (4 of the 60 incidents). The increase in reports is down to the police and council ASB team encouraging partners (including local businesses) to report incidents of Anti Social behaviour for the top 10 ASB perpetrators in the area so that appropriate enforcement and interventions can take place. This includes the council CCTV reporting incidents taking place in the London Road Multi Storey Car Park.

ASB incidents reported to the Councils ASB team and Environmental and Enforcement Services:

Overall there has been a 10% increase (up 116 incidents) in ASB reported to both the Council's ASB team and Environmental and Enforcement services as recorded in Flare.

The data shows there has been 20% increase (up 115 incidents) in eyesore gardens – mainly untidy gardens and rubbish.

There has also been a 52% increase (up 134 incidents) in people noise which is mainly down to an increase in Noise from "Single Family households".

Please note that Eyesore gardens are a largely self generated request code so this increase is due to officers identifying and dealing with premises.

There has been a reduction in almost every other ASB type reported to the Council's ASB Team and Environmental and Enforcement Services including incidents reporting Graffiti.

ASB incidents reported to Housing Services:

ASB incidents reported to Housing (as recorded by the Capita system) YTD (Apr, May, Jun 2016) is down by 59% compared to the same point last year.

The majority of ASB currently being reported is for noise and harassment.

Please note the following data caveat with the Capita system: In September 2014 there was a change made to Capita that ensured that ASB case types could only be worked through the ASB module. At the start of February 2016 the performance and quality officer for housing and environment started investigating why there has been a drop in reported ASB. It was thought that this could be due to a non ASB case type being used to record cases. They ran a report on Breach of Conditions of Tenancy case type for jobs loaded in January 2016. There were 161 cases loaded, with the assistance of the Anti Social Behaviour Coordinator for Housing and Environment, 70 cases were identified that should have been loaded as ASB cases. Work with the administration and management new processes have been established to ensure that this issue is resolved going forward. At June 2016 this has not been completely resolved but has been improved. The Anti Social Behaviour Coordinator and the performance and quality officer for Housing and Environment services have been working with managers to improve how their staff record data and have delivered further training on ASB including recording in the database. They will be monitoring

the recorded data and will be undertaking further work to resolve the issue by the end of Qtr 2 2016/17.

Eyesore gardens are a largely self generated request code so this increase is due to officers identifying and dealing with premises. The following is feedback from Housing and Environment services on activities undertaken to address untidy gardens, rubbish and noise complaints in partnership with other services.

Untidy gardens.

Housing is currently carrying out a 100% tenancy audit of all properties and the condition of the garden is part of the audit. The audits have so far identified that:

Some untidy gardens are due to vulnerable tenants not having any support from relatives or others to maintain the garden space. Housing has put in place an assisted garden programme to provide help to those vulnerable residents. The work is carried out by the Housing Payback Team. From April 2015 to March 2016 we had 1,139 offenders with a total of 7,481 community payback hours spent on Housing projects. As part of this work they completed 96 assisted gardens and helped to clear many tonnes of fly tipping, litter and bulk waste from the estates.

Some of other untidy gardens are “remote gardens” within the flatted accommodation allocated to each tenants and leaseholders. Housing has started a programme of removing the gardens where possible to:

- Convert the land into open communal spaces.
- Release the land for regeneration of new housing/ regeneration projects

Rubbish

In response to the increasing amount of rubbish and fly tipping on the estates, Housing has increased the bulk waste collection teams from two teams to four teams collecting fly tipping and bulk waste Monday to Friday. Housing has now extended this service to a 7 day service with one bulk team covering Saturdays and one bulk team covering Sundays. Housing has also invested in 20 new overt CCTV battery run cameras to target hot spot areas and prosecute offenders.

Housing is also working with Environmental Direct Services to strengthen the control and management of the waste bins on the estates, reduce waste at source and encourage recycling. Often the open waste bins are used by private business to fly tip their waste to avoid landfill charges and on a windy day an overflowing bin can cause a major litter problem on the estates. Housing and Environmental Direct services have just completed a join audit of all waste bins across the 17 Wards with a view to implement action to prevent litter and improve the cleanliness of the estates.

Noise complaints

All noise complaints are dealt with in liaison with the Council Noise team and ASB Team. Tenancy action is taken as and when required.

Addressing antisocial behaviour

Following a review of how we address the needs of repeat victims the Council and Police put in place an intelligence framework to identify and manage harmful offenders, locations of offences, repeat victims and to ensure that processes are in place to identify potentially vulnerable ASB victims.

In Barking and Dagenham, the responsibility for dealing with antisocial behaviour is shared between a number of agencies including the Police, the Council and Social landlords. Barking and Dagenham Council tackles ASB through the Community Safety Team, Housing Services and Environmental Services.

The Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) also address ASB through the ward priorities which are agreed by the SNT ward panel members and the Tenant-funded estates police team that is specifically dedicated to dealing with issues on nine of the Council's housing estates. The team has had considerable success in addressing crime and disorder on the Estates and is well received by tenants.

An ASB Standing Case Conference meets monthly to allow consultation on the best way to manage and deal with most challenging ASB perpetrators. An ASB victims' and frequent callers' meeting is also held monthly to assess the risk to frequent victims and ensure that services are in place to protect them. A hate incident panel meets monthly to consult and plan action to protect victims of hate crime and deal with perpetrators.

The Council commissions Victim Support to provide a Safer Homes Plus Service that provides enhanced home security for victims of ASB and hate related harassment. As well as providing additional security this project also provides victim and witness support services through a High Risk and Vulnerable Victim Support Worker, who works intensively with higher risk victims to ensure that they are supported by services and able to work with services, particularly around holding offenders to account.

The Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 gives partnership services simpler, more effective powers to tackle anti-social behaviour that provide better protection for victims and communities. The new community trigger and community remedy empowers victims and communities giving them a greater say in how agencies respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour and in out-of-court sanctions for offenders.

The introduction of the Private Sector Licensing Scheme in September 2014 has provided greater opportunities to effectively respond to antisocial behaviour in the private rented sector, but also an expectation from the public that these issues will be dealt with robustly. The ASB Team have been working with the Private Sector Licensing Team to identify unlicensed premises, deal with antisocial behaviour in these premises using the additional powers of the Private Sector Licensing Scheme while also supporting licensed landlords to deal with any issues they report.

Supporting private landlords can take the form of generic advice as well as tailored support to avoid the need for enforcement and training. An ASB training programme is currently being developed for Private Sector Housing Officers as well as work to

monitor the effectiveness of the scheme in terms of achieving its key aim which is reducing antisocial behaviour in the private rented sector.

Troubled Families Phase 2 started in 2015/16. The ASB Team as well as other teams in the area of Community Safety will be taking on troubled families case work and coordinating the work around supporting these families. This includes identifying the families which will make up the ASB Troubled Families Cohort, using the CAF (Common Assessment Framework) process to identify need as well as working with the families and other professionals to bring about improvement.

The increase in ASB reports, particularly in light of increases in Serious Youth Violence (SYV) in the same period, has resulted in a review of the use of the repeat and vulnerable victim process for victims of crime as well as victims of ASB. In 2016/17 partners will be looking at how repeat and vulnerable victims of crime can be identified, which provides the opportunity for risk reduction plans to be put in place. This tactic provided large reductions in ASB and it is hoped that by extending this process for victims of incidents which are classified as crime but seen by the public as ASB (for example youth violence) this will produce reductions. The increases in SYV have also resulted in a Youth Violence Action Plan which is being monitored via the Community Safety Partnership and is a partnership plan.

Mediation was a service development identified in the 2015/16 JSNA. 10 staff were provided with accredited mediation training and are holding mediation case loads as of June 2016. The feedback from the mediation they have completed with clients is positive and there are some good examples of mediation being an effective response in terms of long standing neighbour type disputes.

Service development:

Community cohesion

The Department of Communities and Local Government highlighted a number of studies that demonstrate a link between development of health ailments and factors such as living environment (including cohesiveness) and individual social networks¹. These health ailments include conditions such as depression, loneliness, and the probability of committing suicide¹. Kawachi et al in Health and social cohesion, (1999) stated that at the community level, cohesion can influence health outcomes through several different channels. One way is through social control, whereby the community acts in response to deviant health related behaviour, for example it may intervene to prevent deviant youth behaviour such as underage smoking or drug taking. This crucially depends on the existence of mutual trust and solidarity amongst neighbours. Another way it can influence health outcomes is through promotion of healthy norms of behaviour, for example supporting physical activity. Finally it can influence behaviours through more rapid diffusion of health information.

With the growing population and community tensions arising from issues such as Brexit, encouraging community cohesion will become increasingly important.

¹Great Britain. Communities and Local Government (2009) *Guidance for local authorities on how to mainstream community cohesion into other services*. London: Communities and Local Government Publications. (09CFD06053)

Continued investment in estate regeneration and renewal work, as well as the introduction of preventive physical measures that discourage ASB will be a key factor in contributing to community cohesion.

Community Solutions

Although Troubled Families Phase 2 (TF2) has produced preventative ASB work, the work done to combat antisocial behaviour has been predominantly responsive. Supporting residents to deal with ASB at the earliest stage, in a way which promotes social responsibility and community resilience is part of the Council's future vision and a key area of work from 2016 onwards. 'Community Solutions' will be the route into Council services for most residents requesting help, including around ASB issues. The relationship and interdependencies between Community Solutions and Enforcement Services are currently being worked through. The vision is that Community Solutions will work much more in line with the TF2 model and therefore be more preventative in approach. A number of pilots will be undertaken starting September 2016, aiming to test the hypothesis that holistic work with a focus on making residents self reliant will reduce service demand and provide sustainability.

Youth Violence

There has been an increase in SYV, particularly in the first 6 months of 2016. This has prompted the creation of a Youth Violence Action Plan and all agencies with an input into this agenda to review what can be done to reduce violence involving young people. The Youth Violence Action Plan includes activity in the areas of prevention, protection and managing perpetrators including the delivery of this plan and the reduction of SYV as key for 2016/17.

Gaps in delivery

Feedback from staff within ASB services indicates that the behaviour of some ASB perpetrators appears to be linked to undiagnosed or unspecific mental health problems e.g. personality and behaviour disorder. It is often difficult to get access to health or support services for perpetrators of ASB whose behaviour is often linked to these types of disorder. One complicating factor is Dual Diagnosis, where an individual may have mental health issues and substance misuse complications.

Mental health services cannot provide a health assessment on these individuals until their substance misuse issue is addressed, and many of these have difficulty engaging in substance misuse programmes because of their mental health issues. There is also a lack of capacity within the services to adequately support the amount of people coming through with personality disorders. The current lack of trained workers in these fields in the borough is challenging for all concerned.

There are some frequent reporters of ASB where perceptions of their victimisation also appears to be linked to undiagnosed or unspecific mental health problems e.g. personality and behaviour disorder. It is equally difficult to get access to health/support services for this group.

The small Community Safety ASB team approximately deal with 1,000 incidents per year; these are often entrenched, embedded behaviours in terms of offenders. Earlier intervention would need a dedicated resource to address low level behaviour.

All 'people noise' complaints are now dealt with by the ASB Team rather than the Noise Team, as these are unlikely to be resolved via action under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Noise complaints relating to people's behaviour are often best dealt with via mediation, which is delivered by the ASB Team.

A smaller proportion of ASB is targeted, conscious and deliberate, with a proportion motivated by hate. On 16 December 2014 the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) released their Hate Crime Reduction Strategy for London.

MOPAC define hate crimes and hate incidents as:

"A hate crime is defined as any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a personal characteristic; specifically actual or perceived race, religion/faith, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity."

and;

*"A hate crime incident is defined as any non-crime incident which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a personal characteristic; specifically actual or perceived race, religion/faith, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity."*²

In Barking and Dagenham the number of hate crimes reported to the Police have increased by 53% from 280 (August 2013 - June 2014) to 429 (August 2014 to June 2015)³. However, there remains concern that these incidents are under-reported. National statistics indicate that up to 95% of all hate crimes go unreported.

The MOPAC Strategy sets out three overarching objectives which each have stated actions for delivery to fill identified gaps. The majority of the Strategy relates to actions, which are the responsibility of MOPAC. Some of them will be delivered by CSP partners, but these will be driven by MOPAC or by partner agencies' central offices. The objectives of the strategy are to:

- **Boost confidence and increase the reporting of hate crime** by increasing awareness of hate crime through a London-wide hate crime awareness campaign for Hate Crime Awareness Week 2015 and the dissemination of a Hate Crime Pack to every school in London by 2015. MOPAC will also develop a smart phone reporting app, work with the Third Sector to develop a consistent process for third party reporting and develop London-specific resources for the True Vision hate crime reporting website.

² MOPAC, (2014). *A Hate Crime Reduction Strategy for London 2014-17*. p. 9. [online] Available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/MOPAC%20Hate%20Crime%20Reduction%20Strategy%20.pdf> [Accessed 22.07.2015].

³ Source: MetStats <http://www.met.police.uk/crimefigures/datatable.php?borough=kg&period=year>

- **Prevent hate crime and reduce repeat victimisation** by developing an integrated victim management approach, requiring Local Authorities to implement a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or similar process for hate crime offences. Repeat and persistently targeted victims of hate crime will receive an enhanced response and will develop hate crime victim advocates in partnership with the criminal justice system. A web-based victim portal will be created by MOPAC and the Ministry of Justice. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) will introduce Hate Crime Liaison Officers in every London borough and MOPAC will work with criminal justice system partners to develop Hate Crime Victim Advocates to support those who have been targeted. The MPS will prevent hate crime by developing a hate crime hotspot map, which will assist all agencies to target resources into key areas where hate crime takes place. Criminal justice services and housing providers will establish a framework for partners to share crime and anti-social behaviour data to help protect victims. The MPS will incorporate online hate crime into a wider cyber-crime strategy
- **Ensure swift and sure justice for hate crime victims.** The Metropolitan Police Service and Crown Prosecution Service will improve the training for Police Officers and prosecutors to ensure they are adequately trained and equipped to recognise, record and deal with hate crime offences. Criminal justice system partners will ensure there is a consistent restorative justice offer for hate crime victims in appropriate cases and ensure the best possible outcomes for victims. Probation services will ensure that pre-sentence reports recognise hate crime legislation and include the victim's perspective and that hate crime offenders managed by them have risk management plans which focus on victim safety.

The London Voluntary Service Council's London Safer Future Community (SFC) Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Network, involving over 450 voluntary and community sector organisations working in the field of criminal justice, has responded to the Strategy. In summary, the VCSE Network welcomed the publication of the Strategy and hoped that it would enable MOPAC and its partners to take a collaborative and strategic approach to tackling hate crime in London. Their response included a number of suggestions, including recommending an audit of the current levels of resources to address hate crime across London. The Network also recommended that MOPAC should encourage boroughs to support centralised databases where data from third party reporting could be stored, analysed and used to meet local needs. It suggested this would help identify levels of underreporting and gather data on third party reports.

The VCSE Network also put forward a Redbridge Equality and Communities Council (RECC) project as an example of good practice. The project works with communities affected by hate crime and reduces the isolation of victims by building support groups, building awareness and engaging people in prevention activities. Encouraging community witnesses is another essential aspect of this work. The project aims not only to increase hate crime reports but to support victims and send a message of unity to the wider community. This reverses the perpetrator's perception that they have community approval and the victims are isolated. However, the Network notes that this and many similar examples of good practice have experienced recent funding cuts.

ASB is now publicly accepted as a social problem and there is an expectation that the police and the Council will respond to and deal with it. It is not seen as different from or separate to crime but part of a range of linked behaviour that is unpleasant and has a negative impact on quality of life. The quality of life impact has potential to affect the physical and mental health of victims. As such the public is likely to continue to report ASB and to expect the authorities to respond.

Improved IT systems would benefit the whole ASB environment. The automated reporting and processing of complaints is slow and inaccurate. An improved automated system would be quicker and more accurate to allow better responses by the ASB staff. There is also a lot of time and effort spent on investigating the level of service user and ASB perpetrator engagement with the other services within the borough. A quick and simple search tool across council and partnership services would aid this.

Furthermore an upgrade in ASB IT systems which could include a service user feedback form / webpage would be helpful to obtain service user satisfaction with the actions taken and overall process to deal with their ASB complaints. This will also provide useful demographic data for future service planning.

Recommendations for Commissioners

Providing sustainable resourcing for the Safer Homes Plus service that is commissioned by the Council to provide target-hardening measures to the homes of those who are targets of ASB and hate crime. This will reduce repeat callers and Victim, Offender, and Location Tasking meetings, and investing in this will prevent victims from having to present to other partnership services. Resources for this service are currently identified on an annual basis.

Provide sustainable resourcing for Victim Support in supporting those at High Risk and Vulnerable. This role has proved very effective in reducing risk to the most vulnerable ASB victims by intensively working with these clients and supporting them to assist partners in holding offenders to account. Currently the resources for this post are identified on an annual basis

Continue investment in estate regeneration and renewal work, and the introduction of preventive physical measures that discourage ASB. This work contributes to community cohesion and with the regeneration of the borough, a growing population and more people living in closer proximity to each other encouraging community cohesion will become increasingly important. Results in poor health have been linked to a lack of community cohesions.

Initial gaps identified in the recommendations of the MOPAC Hate Crime Reduction Strategy and the responses that have been referred to the Community Cohesion & Hate Crime Strategic Group for further action include:

- The potential for a database to be set up for gathering third party reporting data, enabling analysis of hate crime underreporting, either within the borough or regionally. Funding for such a database will need to be secured.
- Review the evaluation of the Redbridge Equality and Communities Council (RECC) to see if Barking and Dagenham would benefit from such a service depending on a Hate crime needs assessment for the borough. Funding for such a service in the future will need to be secured.

Provide sustainable resourcing for independent mediation services. These services were funded from Home Office funding obtained in 2010 which has now ended. Mediators are professionally accredited and cost in the region of £20,000 per annum. However, for a bespoke course to train Council staff this can be purchased for £1,250 per person for a group of approximately 10-12 staff members. The initial investment in training ASB staff will provide longer term savings in the future.