



Association of
Police and Crime
Commissioners



PCCs MAKING A DIFFERENCE

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN FOCUS

Working in partnership to ensure anti-social behaviour is stopped
in its tracks.

PCCs MAKING A DIFFERENCE

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

IN FOCUS

Foreward from Rachel Maclean,
Minister for Safeguarding

I am delighted to introduce this 'In Focus' report. It shines a light on the important challenge we face and opportunities available in tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB).

An effective response to ASB requires innovation, a strong partnership between local agencies, and a mindset that puts victims first. The case examples in the report underscore the vital role Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) can play in bringing partners together to deal with the root causes of ASB as well as its impact.

Everyone should feel secure and protected in their own homes and neighbourhoods. ASB can threaten fundamental aspects of everyday life, and it is completely unacceptable.

As Minister for Safeguarding, I am determined to ensure that key partners work together to make effective use of the resources and measures available to tackle ASB. What is clear from this report is that the APCC and many PCCs share this determination and there is an opportunity to deliver improved outcomes for the public by working in concert to stop ASB before it emerges and escalates.



Sharing information is an important part of strengthening the level of service we provide to victims. I am pleased to see the report highlights fantastic examples of good practice that can be learned from across the country.

Through the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, the Government provided a range of tools and powers allowing local agencies to respond quickly and effectively to all forms of ASB. It is important that these powers be used to their full potential and combined with a local strategy to drive down ASB.

Left unchecked, ASB can have an overwhelming and devastating impact on individuals, businesses and our communities. This Government is committed to working with the APCC and PCCs to inject energy, innovation and good practice into tackling ASB for the public.

**Joint foreword from the
APCC Local Policing Leads,
Alison Hernandez and
Jeff Cuthbert**

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are elected to act as the public's voice in policing, and what we hear right across England and Wales is that anti-social behaviour matters to local people.

It matters because it affects their everyday quality of life. Policing has always tackled serious violence and high-harm criminality - and will continue to do so - but PCCs have also ensured low-level criminality and anti-social behaviour is not neglected in our forces' priorities and performance activity.

But tackling anti-social behaviour is not just a job for the police. Many of the underlying issues which can lead to anti-social behaviour necessitate a partnership response - things like inadequate housing, alcohol and drugs abuse, and social deprivation. Earlier this year the Beating Crime Plan detailed the Government's commitment to reduce crime, protect victims, and keep our communities safe. These priorities are at the heart of everything that PCCs do and we are using the platform of the Plan to galvanise local and national partners to come together to stop anti-social behaviour in its tracks.

This report, the latest of the APCC's series of In Focus reports, showcases some of the initiatives and projects which PCCs have been driving to do just that.



Some of these projects are preventative, investing in police visibility, security measures, and youth activities. Some of this work is collaborative; bringing partner agencies together to form taskforces and other teams to respond to incidents of anti-social behaviour and find effective solutions to hyper-local problems. And some of the work PCCs are leading on is about the post-incident support available to victims. This includes taking ownership of the Community Trigger process which, if properly promoted, provides victims with a means to have cases reviewed where they are unsatisfied with the partnership response.

As this report shows, PCCs are prioritising anti-social behaviour and holding agencies to account. But going forward, we would like to see PCCs be given a clearer role as local 'guardians' of the response with greater governance, scrutiny and convening powers to ensure all partners are doing as much as they can to tackle anti-social behaviour. Greater availability of data would assist us in scrutinising performance and driving improvements.

Because we, as PCCs, are committed and determined to keep our communities safe, and put victims at the centre of everything we do.

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Preventing anti-social behaviour in our communities

Prevention is always better than cure. People living in communities blighted by anti-social behaviour are relieved when the issues they are experiencing are resolved, but of course would much rather the issues had never occurred in the first place.

It is also more cost effective to work to deliver an effective, long-term response to address the causes of anti-social behaviour and so prevent further incidents, than it is to constantly 'fire fight' incidents as they occur.

It is this recognition of the importance of preventing anti-social behaviour which has led Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to invest funding and resources in schemes which seek to identify and address the root causes rather than just the symptoms.

In many cases, money for such work has been secured from the Government's Safer Streets Fund. More than £40million has been invested in additional CCTV, streetlighting, and other improvements to make areas susceptible to acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour safer.



The APCC's Finance Lead **Roger Hirst**, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) for Essex, said: *"Prevention is not just about officers on the streets. It is about us all working together. Through the Safer Streets Fund, PCCs and our partners are encouraging communities to take pride in where they live and empowering them to make simple changes to cut crime and anti-social behaviour."*



But PCCs are also using their own budgets to support this work. In **Avon and Somerset**, the PCC's office commissions five services - Resolve West, Victim Support, SWAN Vocas, Safe Link, and Young Victims Service - to work collectively to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, prevent conflict, victimisation and re-victimisation.



A Project Coordinator works with school staff, students, parents, and partners to design, develop and coordinate a bespoke programme of awareness and preventative workshops. These workshops improve community relationships and enable greater understanding of the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Some PCCs have launched their own funding rounds specifically to support partners' efforts to tackle anti-social behaviour in their areas. These include **David Sidwick's** Operation Relentless Community Fund in **Dorset**, and **Derbyshire PCC Angelique Foster's** Anti-social Behaviour Prevention Grant. In both those cases, projects are able to bid for up to £5,000 provided they meet strict outcome-focused criteria.



Mr Sidwick said: *"The fund is a way of not only reassuring our communities that we are on their side, but empowering them to help in the fight against anti-social behaviour. Over the coming months and years, I look forward to being able to meet members of these groups and finding out about how their projects are making a difference."*

PCC Foster said: *"I want to make sure every community suffering these problems feels supported and is equipped with the resources and knowledge to deliver swift action when it is needed. Local communities are acutely aware of what is happening and when. If they have the resources to work with local agencies and voluntary groups, they will all achieve far more."*



Increases in anti-social behaviour are sometimes linked to a reduction in available youth-oriented activities and clubs. By way of response, PCCs have funded sports related projects as a means of diverting young and other vulnerable people into environments which provide them with skills and opportunities to thrive.

Cheshire is just one example, where the PCC has begun funding Warrington Safer Together Through Sport. There, an organisation called Live Wire is educating 12 to 14-year-olds about knife crime, anti-social behaviour, and county lines through sport. Working with local schools, the project will introduce young people to the police and volunteers and raise their appreciation of them as positive role models.

In **Gwent**, around 10,000 individuals have engaged with the PCC-funded Positive Futures sport-based inclusion programme leading to a significant reduction in incidents of anti-social behaviour. And similarly, **Bedfordshire PCC Festus Akinbusoye** has funded free boxing and martial arts classes for young people as part of his Summer of Fun programme.

LiveWire 



Speaking of the impact of the classes, **JP Smith from Boxing Saves Lives** said: *"We were blown away by the enthusiasm and engagement of the boys and girls who attended. We know the benefits boxing can bring to the physical and mental health of young people, and it was incredible to see martial arts showcase how this unique perspective can improve lives."*

And **Merseyside PCC Emily Spurrell** has used her Youth Diversion Fund to specifically focus on supporting activities which divert young people away from acts of anti-social behaviour during the Halloween and Bonfire Night period.





NOW OPEN

**YOUTH
DIVERSION
FUND**

For projects running
over Halloween &
Bonfire Night

**GRANTS OF UP TO
£3,000**

EMILY SPURRELL
MERSEYSIDE POLICE
& CRIME COMMISSIONER

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Responding in partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour

Despite the best efforts of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) working alongside local partners to prevent anti-social behaviour, it remains a significant concern for many people right across England and Wales. And because PCCs are elected to act as the voice of the public, tackling anti-social behaviour where it occurs is a top priority for PCCs.

It is important to remember that not all anti-social behaviour is crime and so the response needs to come from a number of agencies, not just the police. PCCs work alongside partners such as the fire service, health services, local councils, and voluntary and community groups, together with the police, to identify problems and deliver joined up responses. They will employ a range of approaches including enforcement activity where appropriate, but also often collaborate on wider preventative tactics like education and providing a visible community presence.

For example, for the last two summers the **PCC for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Alison Hernandez** has made up to £850,000 available for partners to work together to tackle anti-social behaviour in hotspots in her force area. The £500,000 Covid-19 Safer Summer Scheme 2020 was created after a rise in incidents of drunkenness, street urination, unauthorised encampments, and nuisance in some of the most popular tourist destinations in Britain which saw even greater numbers of visitors when the pandemic curtailed much foreign travel.

Local authorities were offered funding to pay for street marshalls who provided more than 15,000 hours of patrols. An investment of £54,800 in CCTV units delivered 2,300 additional CCTV monitoring hours.

Money was also invested in temporary toilets and used to support volunteer groups.

For 2021 the Scheme has focused on anti-social behaviour by young people and in busy night time economies with £350,000 in funding offered by the PCC supported by match funding from local authorities. The funding has been used to deliver street/taxi marshalls and enhanced CCTV as well as projects and activities for young people.

Simon Mould, Head of Service at Cornwall Council, said of the PCC-funded scheme: *"The Safer Summer Scheme met a real need, particularly in a developing, uncertain time. The scheme placed real people on the ground to help provide visible and approachable contacts to help deal with enquiries from the public and to provide Covid related advice and guidance."*



In **Durham**, partnership working is also evident at the Darlington Community Safety Hub where different organisations sit together to manage issues of anti-social behaviour. There is even a Victim Care and Advice Service worker, funded by the Ministry of Justice, sitting in Durham police's force control room who can talk to victims and pass issues to the hub where appropriate.

PCC Joy Allen said: *"The appointment of the Anti-Social Behaviour Victims' Champion is the first of many actions I intend to take to get a grip of anti-social-behaviour in the force area by delivering what matters to local people whilst ensuring the victims of crime get the support they need. The hub model in Darlington provides a co-ordinated and responsive approach which I am keen for myself and others to learn from and continue to support going forward."*



Gwent has adopted a partnership approach to tackle specific issues of fire crime - an extreme form of anti-social behaviour which endangers lives. From deliberately-started grass fires in the countryside, to burning bins in urban areas, Gwent is disproportionately affected.

The **PCC Jeff Cuthbert** funds a dedicated Fire Crime Practitioner post within the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service to reach out to young people through schools. They also target problem areas to engage with potential arsonists and educate them about the potentially devastating impact of their actions.



In **Lincolnshire**, **PCC Marc Jones** identified fly-tipping as a particular problem in the county. Though traditionally the responsibility of local authorities, Mr Jones brought together key partners including police, councils, the Environment Agency, and drainage boards to assess the scale of the problem and understand what was being done about it.

Attendees signed a pledge to seek ways of better working together to tackle fly-tipping, and a SCRAP campaign was launched to remind people to check waste was being taken away for disposal by a licensed carrier. On the back of the PCC's summit, a multi-agency environmental crime partnership group was also formed.

Leader of North Kesteven District Council, Cllr Richard Wright said: *"The support the group has received is really good news. It shows fly-tipping is not just a council issue but that all sorts of agencies want to help to convince people that this sort of behaviour is just not acceptable."*



Similarly in **Hampshire**, **PCC Donna Jones** launched a new taskforce that brings together all the relevant organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour. Created in 2021, the taskforce is a collaboration between the PCC and Hampshire Constabulary, with police District Commanders taking a lead role. Local stakeholders and partners, including registered social landlords, will be identifying and tackling specific issues that require action beyond policing alone.

Jonathan Cowie, Chief Operating Officer at affordable housing provider VIVID said: *"We're pleased to partner up with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones, to help tackle anti-social behaviour and make our local communities safer. As one of the largest housing associations in the south of England, we're determined to ensure our customers feel safe and secure in their homes and neighbourhoods and proud of where they live."*

"We're looking forward to starting work and use our collective knowledge and expertise to make a real difference where it's needed most."



VIVID

Thurrock Council, in **Essex**, is working closely with the county's Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) **Roger Hirst**.

Mr Hirst said: *"Funded by Thurrock Council, additional officers provide reassurance to residents and have achieved some tremendous results in apprehending and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. This is a real example of partnership working - not only coming up with ways of working together, but putting money where our mouths are and making it happen."*

Council leader Rob Gledhill, added: *"We know that anti-social behaviour is a cause of real concern for many of our residents. We are committed to working closely with Essex Police to ensure those who commit these offences are stopped in their tracks and the punishment they receive serves as a warning to others."*



And a taskforce has also been set up in **Northumbria**, where PCC **Kim McGuinness** pledged £250,000 to bring together partners together. The goal there is for residents to have access to an easy and transparent route to help, especially when they are persistently experiencing anti-social behaviour. Vulnerable victims and victims of persistent anti-social behaviour are being identified to ensure they receive a prioritised response.

Dafydd Llywelyn was keen to involve local communities in identifying solutions to local problems. The **Dyfed-Powys PCC** committed money to each of the force's neighbourhood policing areas with communities given a say in how their allocation was spent.

In deprived parts of Llanelli, for example, money was used to extend a project whereby local children and young people attend free sports coaching sessions, and sessions addressing crime issues.

Llanelli Town Councillor Sean Rees said: *"This project really has gone from strength to strength with increased numbers taking part with every session. We are seeing less young people hanging around the streets and causing less anti-social behaviour by creating a safe, friendly environment."*

And in neighbouring **South Wales**, a dedicated Crimestoppers campaign is seeking to actively promote anonymous methods of reporting crime in two Cardiff communities where residents expressed a reluctance to expand Neighbourhood Watch. The campaign utilises social media messaging and GPS-targeted banner adverts on mobile phones.



Cymru/Wales

CrimeStoppers.

0800 555 111

100% diennw. Bob tro.
100% anonymous. Always.

3

Supporting victims of anti-social behaviour and finding solutions

When anti-social behaviour occurs, the police and partners will do their utmost to find those responsible and take appropriate action. But action must also be taken to support those most affected - the victim(s) and the wider community.

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are responsible for providing support services for victims of crime in their area. But as many forms of anti-social behaviour are not criminal, the funding they receive to commission victims' services does not extend to anti-social behaviour.

However, PCCs recognise that anti-social behaviour is not 'low level'. Someone affected by anti-social behaviour can still be left traumatised and ultimately feeling unsafe where they live.

As a result, PCCs go above and beyond what is legally required of them and ensure there is provision in place to help victims and others affected by anti-social behaviour recover from what they have experienced.

For example, the **Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) Ben Adams** is jointly commissioning an anti-social behaviour and mediation service. This will enable victims to recover from the impact and harm of incidents, whether they have reported to the police or not. Among other things, the service provider will offer tailored advice, guidance, and practical or emotional support; as well as a mediation service to bring parties together to rebuild relationships and agree pragmatic but proportionate solutions. This, in turn, helps to break the cycle of anti-social behaviour and empowers victims to move on.

Melina Hancox, Area Manager at Victim Support, said: *"We can assist victims to effectively identify anti-social behaviour, deal with its effects, seek the appropriate support and move forward with their lives. Making this service available across the area to work closely with local authority teams and other partners will help us all to collectively tackle the problem."*

Mr Adams said: *"The distress caused by anti-social behaviour can be considerable so this service in Staffordshire, one of the first nationally, will help to keep the needs of the victims foremost in the minds of our community safety partnerships."*



In **Durham**, a Community Peer Mentoring service has been developed. These are volunteers who offer mentoring support to individuals in the local community, many of whom are either victims or indeed perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. Mediation is also available, with work ongoing to see how this method of resolving issues can be rolled out to deal with more cases.



And in **Avon and Somerset, PCC Mark Shelford** commissions a number of providers to support local people who have been victims of anti-social behaviour, such as Victim Support. The charity supports victims and signposts them to other services as part of a clear and established local care pathway, with protocols and communications in place to ensure victims are provided with the right support by the right agency at the right time.

Adam was supported by Victim Support after experiencing ongoing harassment and anti-social behaviour. He had existing mental health issues which were being exacerbated by issues with his neighbour. He was frustrated, angry, and felt let down by his housing association and by the police.

Victim Support referred Adam to **Swan Victims of Crime Advocacy Service (VOCAS)** where he disclosed information about his traumatic childhood, experiences of mental health issues, and suicidal thoughts. Victim Support helped Adam identify his coping strategies going forward and remained in contact with him after he moved house and got his life going back in the right direction.

Regarding the help from his Victim Support case worker, Adam said: *"I can only say good things. He has been brilliant. I'm extremely impressed. I felt he was on my side."*

It's inevitable that in some cases victims suffering repeatedly from anti-social behaviour will become disillusioned and dissatisfied with what they perceive to be inaction from the relevant authorities.

Since 2014, there has existed a Community Trigger mechanism which victims can use to insist the local council reviews the response and considers what else can be done. However, it is accepted that much more work needs to be done to raise awareness of this appeal system.

**victim
support**

**Myth Busting
Advocacy**
SWAN
South West Advocacy Network

vocas
Victims of Crime
Advocacy Service

"I'm a victim of crime, but
haven't reported to the
police...
**Can I still have support
from a Victim Advocate?"**

#AAW20
Advocacy
Awareness
week
26th - 30th October 2020

For that reason, **Dyfed-Powys Police** became the first force in Wales to be awarded for its commitment to victims, having signed up to the charity ASB Help's Pledge. The Pledge commits officers and staff to giving victims of anti-social behaviour a voice when they feel their case has not been adequately responded to. Dyfed-Powys Police's Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator has been working closely with the Chief Executive Officer of ASB Help to promote the force's best practice regarding the Community Trigger.

PCC Dafydd Llywelyn said: *"As the point of appeal for those who are not satisfied with the outcome of the Community Trigger, I am directly involved, and committed to ensure that victims of anti-social behaviour receive appropriate support and that agencies are being held to account. I am pleased the proactive steps we have taken here in Dyfed-Powys in developing a robust and comprehensive Community Trigger policy and procedure, demonstrates that commitment."*

THE ASB PLEDGE



Other PCCs like **Devon and Cornwall** and **Nottinghamshire** have followed suit. In **Merseyside**, **PCC Emily Spurrell** united with the charity ASB Help to run an online workshop attended by more than 30 organisations to raise awareness of the Community Trigger process.

ASB Help's Rebecca Brown said: *"The Community Trigger is an essential mechanism for both victims and practitioners. It enables victims to use their voice and explain clearly the harm being caused to them and give their opinion on what a resolution would look like. For practitioners, it gives them back some control to raise the profile of a case and collaborate with community stakeholders to create an action plan to resolve it."*





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