



ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

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SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL – 12 MAY 2023

SUBJECT: NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

**SUMMARY:**

1. This report will explain the Constabulary's approach to Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). It details the current performance, demand, and activity with the inclusion of statistical information where relevant.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is asked to consider the progress made by the Constabulary and raise issues with Chief Constable as appropriate to the PCC's role in holding the Chief Constable to account.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) are highlighted as priorities for Suffolk Constabulary. The Police response to ASB correlates directly to the confidence communities have in their local force. Rated 'Good' by the HMICFRS in 2021/2022 as part of the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) report, Suffolk continues to engage on a local and national level with partners to offer our victims and communities the best level of service.

1.2 This paper is underpinned by objective 1 of the Police and Crime Plan, which states the Constabulary will:

- Prevent and tackle ASB, crime and disorder (with focussed activity in geographic hot spots e.g. town centres)
- Support a partnership problem solving approach to preventing Anti-Social Behaviour and crime. *(Through working with CSP partners in respect of crime prevention solutions and ASB Community Trigger mechanisms)*
- Report on the force approach to Neighbourhood Crime and ASB.

1.3 Suffolk Police is committed to providing a high quality of service to our communities, with a focus on equipping all teams with the appropriate training and skills to deliver good quality investigative standards. It is the responsibility of the County Policing Command (CPC) to manage the prevention and longer-term resolution of ASB whilst working in a partnership environment. The Teams are moving towards early interventions through traditional and holistic approaches to reduce the threat and risk to our victims as well as paying particular attention to high demand areas. The Crime, Safeguarding and Investigation Management team (CSIM) are the owners of burglary and robbery offences, but rely on a one team approach with CPC colleagues to focus on the prevention, detection and long-term problem solving for these and other crime types.

1.4 The data used in this report is accurate to the 28 February 2023, unless otherwise stated. In total in the last 12 months there has been a 4.25% reduction in neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour across Suffolk.

## 2. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

ASB	Last 12 Months	Three Year Average	% Difference (L12M to TYA)	Previous 12 months	% Difference (P12M to L12M)
ASB Environmental	786	915	-14.20%	922	-14.80%
ASB Nuisance	5613	6736	-16.70%	6559	-14.40%
ASB Personal	1636	1453	12.60%	1415	15.60%
ASB Total	8035	9104	-11.74%	8896	-9.68%

**Environmental:** This includes 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.

**Nuisance:** This is an act, condition, thing, or person that causes trouble, annoyance, inconvenience, offence or suffering to the local community in general rather than to individual

victims. It includes incidents where behaviour goes beyond the conventional bounds of acceptability and interferes with public interests including health, safety and quality of life.

**Personal:** This is either deliberately targeted at an individual or group or having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large. It includes incidents that cause concern, stress, disquiet and/or irritation through to incidents which have a serious adverse impact on people's quality of life.

2.1 Governance

2.2 Suffolk Constabulary's Western Area Commander is responsible for the strategic oversight of ASB, aligning our organisational response to the Pursue strand of the Neighbourhood Policing Strategy. A new ASB Policy has been imbedded within local policing. The delivery of the policy is monitored through a bespoke ASB Review Team, and the Neighbourhood and Partnership Team (NPT) Inspector who will dip sample investigations for quality control. The ASB Delivery plan drives forward ongoing work, documenting progress against identified priorities and ongoing workstreams. The Delivery Plan priorities are discussed as part of the bi-monthly Neighbourhood Policing Board, chaired by the County Policing Command (CPC) Chief Superintendent. The quarterly internal ASB Scrutiny Panel adds another layer to the quality control, with common themes and solutions discussed in the ASB Champions Group. The County ASB Steering Group feeds into the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. This steering group has support from Suffolk County Council and all district and borough councils and is a direct link to Community Safety Partnerships and council ASB leads.

2.3 Key areas of work

- i) **ASB Policy Review** – The revised policy has now been published providing clear guidance to all departments. As part of the ASB development plan, a continuous review of our practices continues through audits the Review Team to ensure the policy is adhered to.
- ii) **Force Wide Learning and Continuous Professional Development (CPD)** – All front-line County Policing Command Officers received the ASB training, and the NPT continues to offer support and advice to both CPC and CCR colleagues. The training was backed up with further inputs directed at Sergeants and Inspectors to reinforce expectations. CPD must be a two-way process, with the NPT learning from practitioners, understanding how policy is embedded and updating procedures so they remain current.
- iii) **Investigation Standards** – Anti-Social Behaviour crime classifications have been added to the countywide Inspector audit process. On a monthly basis (rotated through several crime types), Inspectors will perform a full audit of ASB investigations focussing on the key areas of data integrity and the victim's code of practice (VCOP). These audits provide a wider opportunity to highlight good working practices whilst also recognising organisational learning through the identification of common themes. The NPT Inspector also dip samples ASB investigations from across the County daily to highlight learning and best practice with investigating officers.
- iv) **Information Sharing** – Outside of the partnership Information Sharing Agreement (ISA), we continue to work with Ipswich Borough Council on an agreement that will allow the Council to share information relating to their premises directly with our intelligence units. Predominantly focussed on the use of cannabis in socially owned properties, this process will allow swift action as part of a wider process to support our partners in resolving ASB linked to the smell and use of the drug inside residential properties. Once this pilot is assessed, we will look to replicate it Countywide with other Local Authorities.
- v) **HMICFRS and the PEEL Inspection** – His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) rated the Constabulary 'Good' at preventing crime and anti-social

behaviour in the 2021/22 Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) report. Whilst recognising the significant work we have undertaken to understand our ASB demand, they identified that we need to improve how we record anti-social behaviour. As a result of the report, more training has been provided to the Contact and Control Room (CCR) and all Sergeants and Inspectors have received additional inputs on ASB processes with a focus on crime recording and investigation. The HMICFRS also identified an area for improvement around problem solving, and again, additional training and renewed energy has been invested into upskilling officers as well as working on improving the confidence of staff in understanding how and when to use problem solving plans to positive effect when dealing with ASB.

- vi) **Quality Assurance and Review** – The ASB Review Team commenced a further period of targeted analysis in November 2022. The task this time was to assess how the new ASB policy and associated processes had landed, comparing results from this review period to the last, and identifying common factors that influenced the error rate. Aided by the Constabulary Performance Improvement Unit, the team dissected every ASB CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) and investigation over a three-month period, carrying out reality testing through call-backs to victims and highlighting to investigators errors in real time. The review has shown that we have improved our crime recording linked to ASB, therefore evidencing a degree of success against the area highlighted by the HMICFRS for improvement. It also highlighted inconsistencies in how policy is followed against several factors, including the supervisor response to risk assessments, and identifying resolutions to ASB problems. The new round of supervisor training has placed a level of importance against these areas, and the Review Team will continue to operate moving forward to assess the progress of the training. The value in continuing to support the Review Team is in the live time assessment of antisocial behaviour investigations, with the experts on the team acting as tactical advisors to address concerns at the start of an investigation, assisting steering the investigating officer towards those early interventions, and concentrating on reducing the risk for the victim.
- vii) **Developing our response to ASB** – The Constabulary internal quarterly ASB Scrutiny Panel now includes an open invitation for partners to attend. The Panel is a protected environment for those involved in the recording and investigating of ASB to dissect samples, understanding what is recognised as ‘good’ and where learning can be taken away. The partnership element has proven important in helping to understand the differences in recording, and provides a valuable, experienced non-policing view on our recording. In addition to the scrutiny panel, we have identified ASB Champions from across the county who meet quarterly to discuss the common themes, national updates and provide feedback on policy and process changes. The Champion’s group is a vital link to the operational response to ASB and has continued to help shape how we record and investigate ASB.

## 2.4 The Future

The Constabulary will further cement its existing partnerships with a focus on early intervention and resolution for the victim through the identification and resolution of the problem. We will focus our attention on solved rates and outcomes to ensure we fully understand how to resolve ongoing and repeat demand therefore improving victim satisfaction. Working with the County Steering Group, we will also continue to monitor the effectiveness of the digital multi-agency platform ECINS (Empowering Communities with Integrated Network Systems) and explore alternative options for the future that may be more cost effective and provide wider engagement from the workforce. We are now in the process of understanding the newly published ASB Action Plan, issued by the Government at the end of March 2023. Working with the County Steering Group, we will dissect the plan, building in practices to implement the new proposals.

## 2.5 Anti-Social Behaviour Civil Orders

Used effectively, civil orders can have an instant positive impact on offender behaviour. As an early intervention tool, community protection warning letters and full community protection notices prevent situations escalating and can be issued either in addition to criminal sanctions or in situations where criminal behaviour is yet to be occur. Where a perpetrator continues to commit serious, persistent criminal offences of an anti-social nature, courts can issue criminal behaviour orders upon conviction to further restrict that person's ability to commit further anti-social behaviour. Similarly, injunction can have the same effect by targeting those responsible and prohibiting them from conducting further activities to prevent repeat offending. The number of live civil powers recorded across the Constabulary in the reporting period (1<sup>st</sup> March 2022 – 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023) are as follows:

ORDER	TOTAL	Difference from last reporting period
Community Protection Notice Warning Letters (CPNWL)	101	↑ 66
Community Protection Notice (CPN)	49	↑ 16
Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO)*	6	↑ 2
Injunctions**	2	↔ 0

\* CBOs that have been granted at court

\*\* Injunctions obtained by police as lead agency

## 2.6 Examples of Organisational Growth

**Example 1** – A group of juveniles aged between 11 and 16 years were meeting in the centre of Ipswich, committing anti-social behaviour targeting town centre shops and businesses. Staff and business owners were subjected to verbal abuse, criminal damage and wider behaviour that caused harassment, alarm and distress to the public and workers, resulting in 25 CADs and 16 investigations recorded over a 3-month period. The Ipswich Central SNT collated the concerns of all 16 businesses that had reported incidents, before identifying the 13 young perpetrators. Officers worked with partner agencies to explore the backgrounds of those involved in offences. They engaged with the appropriate education providers, carried out home visits and identified the wider impact of the offending. Officers engaged the Street Rangers, the businesses, and Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) to identify hot spot locations before deploying appropriate resource to those areas at the key times. Having identified those responsible, officers expedited interviews with those suspected of committing criminal offences. For those aged under 16 years, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC) were issued in conjunction with IBC. Those over the age of 16 were given Community Protection Warning Letters (CPWL), and in some cases, parents of those involved were also issued with CPWL due to the lack of concern and parental supervision provided. Banning letters prohibiting the offenders from entering the shops were also issued, whilst Police shared relevant information with the businesses to support their pursuit of civil enforcement. Once the preventative measures had been put into place, the relevant schools were updated to ensure adherence to the measures could be monitored throughout the week, and not just in the evenings. Increased visibility throughout the investigative period meant offences were resolved at the earliest opportunity. As a result of the action taken, over the course of the following 3 months, Suffolk Police received zero calls and recorded zero investigations in relation to the town centre ASB.

**Example 2** – A family were subjected to ASB and criminality by a group of juveniles. Objects including eggs were thrown at their property, the front door was kicked regularly, and windows knocked on. The male occupant, vulnerable through complex learning needs and age, was subjected to verbal abuse. The repetition of the issues created fear amongst the victims resulting in them feeling harassed. The family lived in a council owned property, so Police instigated a multi-agency approach bringing in housing, Council ASB practitioners and Social Care representatives. Suitable third sector providers were also identified who could assist the family with additional engagement and support. Through analysis of the problem, it was quickly determined that a local spike in ASB was all targeted towards this one property, so patrols and engagement became focussed on the area to identify those responsible. 11 Juveniles were interviewed over the persistent behaviour with two being reported for criminal damage and harassment. Whilst this intervention had an immediate impact on the demand, it was not to last, with incidents increasing in frequency again a short time later. Despite the household not having any internet connection, police worked with the Council to identify a suitable neighbour who could host a Ring doorbell, allowing the victims to then have a device fitted on their property. This coincided with additional security and target hardening measures implemented upon advice from Design Out Crime Officers (DOCO). Through engagement with Social Care and the NHS, the care structure around the family improved with more regular visits taking place to provide additional support to the household. Schools Liaison Officers (SLO) then deployed into local schools to provide targeted inputs around ASB as well as to work with the school in focussing on how to change the behaviour of the identified perpetrators. Additional fencing was erected to prevent easy access to the property's garden, and ASB surveys were delivered as part of increased visibility. The impact of the multi-agency actions was evident through a heavy reduction in reporting, with the victims being satisfied with the support put into place. Following the ongoing assessment of the family's needs, alternative housing provision was identified, moving the victims into a bungalow a short distance away that was more suitable for their needs.

**Example 3** – A male was living in self-made, self-contained accommodation situated 14 feet underground in a wooded area. The male was known to be confrontational, aggressive, and violent towards residents in the village, and those using the woodland for recreational pursuits. An element of risk existed in the structure collapsing which not only would have affected the male but would also impact the landowner and users of the land. The male's behaviour escalated by blocking footpaths and erecting wooden stakes in the ground to keep people away from his makeshift home. Following allegations that the male had threatened a member of the public with a machete, he was arrested. Officers then worked with the Local Authority to identify the landowner before setting out a multi-agency plan to evict the male and fill in the hole. Upon analysis of the demand, additional patrols were deployed to the area to support public reassurance and intelligence gathering. Additional liaison with the Parish Council and the victims was implemented to ensure all parties understood the plans and how best to support the action to evict. A community protection notice was issued to the man whilst officers simultaneously worked with partners to not only resolve the problem of the male living in the hole, but to find support mechanisms through referrals and conversations with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Officers recognised that evicting the male was only a part of a longer-term resolution, so it was important that a different approach was taken to ensure the male had somewhere to go at the end. The male was evicted and rehomed at a relative's address, whilst the landowner was able to repair the land making it accessible once more to the public.

### 3. NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME – RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

3.1 Crime, Safeguarding and Incident Management (CSIM) continue to have overall ownership of the investigative response to residential burglary offences. The primary responsibility sits with CID and is monitored by Detective Inspectors. Further monitoring takes place through force and local performance meetings and strategic governance.

3.2 The Constabulary's approach to dwelling burglary remains unchanged. The Contact and Control Room (CCR) continue to use the Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability, Engagement (THRIVE) model, and use established deployment procedures to assess the response to burglary. Reviews by detective supervisors and managers assist in the early identification of crime series, trends and enforcement opportunities which is led, wherever possible, by CSIM resources with CPC support. This approach is constantly reviewed to ensure that an appropriate victim focussed response is provided and lessons learnt from any missed opportunities or good practice. This is in line with the guidance and commitment to attending such crimes that was published jointly by the College of Policing and NPCC lead recently

3.3 The Constabulary's policy is that all victims of a residential burglary will be visited by an officer unless there is a clear and justifiable reason as to why this is not appropriate or required.

3.4 On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, the Home Office National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) reverted back to the previous recording measures. Under the previous rules outbuildings within the property boundaries, but not connected were counted as residential burglaries. The change directs that a residential burglary is where a dwelling is entered, or any outbuilding/garage where there is a connecting door to the home. The new guidance reflects the public's perception and expectation of how we define a residential burglary.

3.5 The Constabulary identified a need to differentiate between homes which were entered and outbuildings which were subject to burglary, as a result we always have the ability to separate the different types of burglary to establish the true reflection of the numbers, solved rate and trends under both different recording standards.

3.6 Detective Inspectors have an overview of all offences and are responsible for the identification of crime trends and co-ordinating enforcement action. A suspect focussed approach is undertaken using the Area Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group (ATTG) process and Daily Management Meetings (DMM) to allocate suitable resources to arrest and process perpetrators.

3.7 Insight, an analysis and data collection program, allows managers and staff to look at overall trends down to individual localities. Areas with higher numbers of crimes or lower detection rates are highlighted and reviewed with an improvement plan instigated where and when required.

3.8 The force performance figures for the last 12 months are contained in the table below:

Residential Burglary	Last 12 Months	Long Term Ave	% Difference L12M / LTA
Offences Recorded	1249	1548	-19.3%
Number solved	133	154	-13.8%
% Solved	10.7%	11.0%	-0.7%

3.9 The Converter Team remains key to maximising solved rates and providing victims with a high level of service. From April 2022 to April 2023 a total of 19 burglary dwelling offences were solved by taking offences into consideration (TIC) following a charge, with 3 attempted burglary dwellings also taken into consideration. The Team is undergoing a review to ensure they remain effective and efficient and are able to best contribute to detecting crime and supporting victims.

3.10 An example of the positive approach to Burglary was a male in the Lowestoft area who was charged and remanded for Burglary dwellings in Lowestoft. His method was to remove key safes from outside homes and force them open to gain access to the key inside which he used to gain entry. This offence type disproportionately targeted vulnerable and elderly victims and those requiring care in their home. He was approached in prison and made voluntary admissions to 16 burglary offences. He received a sentence of 6 years and 9 months imprisonment. This demonstrates the approach to the identification, progression and positive outcomes for series offences and is replicated throughout the County when required.

#### **4. NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME - ROBBERY**

4.1 Robbery remains a priority for both criminal investigations departments and local policing.

ROBBERY	Last 12 Months	Long Term Ave	% Difference L12M / LTA
Offences Recorded	289	308	-6.3%
Number solved	51	58	-13.3%
% Solved	17.7%	19.1%	-1.5%

4.2 There were 16 offences of robberies against businesses recorded in the last 12 months, 7 of these offences resulted in offender/s being charged.

4.3 In December 2022, a male from the Sudbury area was jailed for committing robberies in Clare and Norfolk using crowbars to threaten shop staff and received a 10 ½ year prison sentence. This was an investigation jointly owned between Norfolk and Suffolk teams and demonstrated the positive approach taken to cross border offending which seriously impacts on the local communities

4.4 Robbery offences are reported through the Constabulary Daily Management Meeting (DMM) to ensure local, and investigations senior managers have oversight and an understanding of the trends and issues. This also provides for a robust system to allocate investigations and manage safeguarding risks.

4.5 Suffolk sees low levels of robbery offences (289) in comparison to the most similar police forces in the UK, these levels are also low compared to other forces in the Eastern region.

4.6 In December 2022, Suffolk participated in Operation Calibre which was a National week of action. This included reviews of disruption tactics for the sale of stolen items (specifically mobile phones) and a focus on the arrest of outstanding robbery suspects. In 2021 there were only 8 robbery offences reported in Suffolk for the relevant week. In 2022 this saw 4 offences

force wide in the week prior to the operation and 5 during the action week. These were very low numbers in the busiest shopping week before Xmas.

- 4.7 CSIM retain responsibility for performance in this area, with local Detective Inspectors allocated to perform monthly and quarterly reviews and report on the current picture regarding youth offending, county lines linked crime and business offences.
- 4.8 Solved rate remains relatively static at 17.7%, compared to 17.0% in the last reporting period. This is in the lower exception range and is continually monitored.
- 4.9 The Constabulary Robbery Plan is reviewed quarterly and managed by the Southern Area Detective Inspectors. This plan looks at trends, policing responses, the use of best evidence and problem solving to continue the trend towards offence reduction.

## **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

- 5.1 The use of THRIVE at first point of contact still provides the foundations for the policing response, this approach helps to build trust and confidence from within the community as each demand is assessed using the same process.
- 5.2 In all cases the victim's vulnerability is assessed. A person is vulnerable if as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation. History tells us that vulnerable people within the community are likely to be targeted by perpetrators of neighbourhood crime, ASB and hate crime. Often the cumulative effect of these seemingly low-level crimes can have a devastating effect on the individual both mentally and physically. By identifying vulnerability, the Constabulary can be flexible in its approach and deploy resources appropriately.

## **6. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The Constabulary has well developed plans where neighbourhood crime is concerned. There is a growing political focus on ASB and the force lead is taking steps to ensure local activities are aligned to the national strategy. Internal governance is strong in all areas and Constabulary engages with the appropriate partnerships to ensure a collective responsibility to crime and ASB prevention.
- 6.2 ASB continues to show decline against long term averages and local performance where burglary and robbery is concerned is exceptional when considered against the national trends. There are sustained reductions in crimes committed following the pandemic period and solved rates have remained consistent.