



ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

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**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
17 NOVEMBER 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) remain as priorities for Suffolk Constabulary. In the 2023-2025 Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) report by HMICFRS, Suffolk were rated 'Good' in the area of 'Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour and reducing vulnerability'.
- 1.2 Suffolk are committed to maintaining this standard by working with partners on a local and national level, using best practice to ensure victims and communities receive the highest level of service.
- 1.3 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 Case Review mechanisms)*
 - Report on the force approach to Neighbourhood Crime and ASB.
- 1.4 Within Suffolk Constabulary, ASB is the responsibility of the County Policing Command (CPC). To date the portfolio has been held by the Western Area CPC Commander with oversight from the CPC Commander. From the 1st December 2023 the ASB portfolio will be held by the newly formed Community Prevention and Partnership hub. This hub will ensure that partnership and problem-solving approaches are used to prevent and resolve ASB in the most effective and enduring way, with tactical delivery falling to the new Community Policing Teams (CPTs) on each area.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 This report will also report on theft of and theft from motor vehicles, and address some of the concerns recently raised in relation to Retail Theft/Shoplifting.
- 1.7 The data used in this report is accurate to the 31st August 2023, unless otherwise stated. In total in the last 12 months there has been a 12.4% 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	806	913	-11.7%	836	-3.6%
ASB Nuisance	5250	6558	-19.9%	6170	-14.9%
ASB Personal	1760	1514	16.2%	1557	13.0%
ASB Total	7816	8985	-13.01%	8896	-12.14%

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.

Whilst the above data shows a 13% rise in Personal ASB this is due to the work that has been completed around Risk Assessment compliance over the last 12 months. Calls that would have previously been classified as Nuisance are now being subjected to a comprehensive two-part Risk Assessment matrix which allows impact on individuals to be assessed. This has led to the increase in personal and decrease in Nuisance through correct classification. Overall there has been a -12.14% reduction in all ASB reported.

2.1 Governance

2.2 ASB is one of several Neighbourhood Policing portfolios and currently sits under the strategic leadership of the Western Area Commander, but as of the 1st December 2023 it will move to be owned by the Community Partnership and Prevention Hub (CPPH).

2.3 Under both its current and future ownership, the portfolio reports to the County Policing Command (CPC) Chief Superintendent via the Neighbourhood Policing Board. This board monitors the progress against the ASB delivery plan, holds the portfolio holder to account and sets priorities to be adopted as part of the plan. The delivery plan directs ongoing improvement work and ensures that ASB delivery remains compliant with national standards and best practice.

2.4 Compliance with the Suffolk ASB policy as well as National Reporting Standards is checked regularly through auditing and dip sampling by the ASB Review Team. Any thematic or repeat non-compliance is then added to the delivery plan to be addressed via training and development at whatever level required.

2.5 The County ASB Steering Group exists to ensure a partnership approach is taken to tackle ASB in a consistent way across the whole county. The group is currently chaired by police, but membership includes all district, borough and county councils, youth justice services, health, crown prosecution service and adult and children social service representatives. This steering group feeds into and is accountable to the Suffolk Safer and Stronger Communities Board (SSCB).

2.6 Key areas of work

i) **Introduction of Single Online Home for ASB reporting** – the new national online reporting system has been launched in Suffolk with the ASB reporting facility going live on the 21st of September 2023. The system will direct those reporting anti-social behaviour to the most appropriate agency at the earliest opportunity. The system will also identify crime within the report at the first stages ensuring the most appropriate and proportionate response and investigation, and that crimes are not missed.

Whilst the introduction of Single Online Home has brought many benefits to the handling of ASB calls it has required a change to the way risk and vulnerability is triaged by the police call handlers. This change has been necessary to ensure that no matter which way ASB is reported to police, whether online or by phone, the risk is assessed the same way ensuring continuity and a standardised level of service to the public no matter the means of reporting.

This change will also necessitate amendments being made to the current ASB policy, but this will be progressed after a period of testing to ensure confidence around the handling of risk and service delivery.

ii) **Quarterly Performance Pack** - A new quarterly performance pack produced by colleagues in the Strategic Business and Operational Service (SBOS) allows ASB performance across the county to be reviewed and improvement requirements identified. Development of an ASB dashboard is also underway, based on the performance pack, that will make ongoing performance analysis possible.

iii) **Quality Assurance and Review** – The ASB Review Team supported by the force Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) are to commence a further period of targeted analysis from December 2023 to February 2024. The task this time will be to assess how the introduction of Single Online Home has landed, comparing results from this review period to the last review period, that being before the introduction of Single Online Home, identifying positive impacts of the new reporting system, also identifying common factors that influenced the error rate. Aided by the PIU, the team will dissect every ASB CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) and investigation over a three-month period. The review will show if the force continues to improve our crime recording linked to ASB. It will also highlight any inconsistencies in how policy is followed against several factors, including the supervisor response to risk assessments, and identifying resolutions to ASB problems.

iv) **HMICFRS and the PEEL Inspection** - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) in the reporting period 2023-2025 have rated the Constabulary 'Good' at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour in the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) report. Whilst recognising the significant work the constabulary have undertaken to understand ASB demand, they identified that improvement was needed in how we identify and record crime when ASB 'personal' is being reported. As a result, more focused training has been provided to the Contact and Control Room (CCR) to address this 'area for

improvement’ and the force is confident that changes to policy and the introduction of single online home will improve this further with improvement results being realised in early 2024.

- v) **New Operating Model / Community Policing Teams** – As of the 4 December 2023 the new CPC operating model launches across Suffolk with the introduction of Community Policing Officers (CPO). ASB will be a priority for CPOs and to support them to effectively deliver, an ASB training package, including investigation recording standards for ASB, will be delivered to all officers undertaking this role.

The new model also brings with it the introduction of 2 x ASB officers who will be trained to the standard of subject matter experts and be part of the CPPH, available to support all officers and staff across Suffolk in relation to ASB.

- vi) **ASB Case Reviews** – Through the County ASB Steering Group it was agreed that all ASB Case Reviews (formally Community Triggers) would be raised via the relevant District Councils with appeals being heard by Suffolk County Council. Suffolk Constabulary provide ongoing support by attending and / or chairing ASB Case Review meetings when appropriate. Despite some national criticism regarding the correct promotion and application for the case review process (Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman – ‘Out of Order’: learning lessons from complaints about antisocial behaviour) the Suffolk ASB Steering Group have made efforts to ensure that this is not the case in Suffolk with promotion of the ASB Case Review being the focus of both the 2022 and 2023 Anti-Social Behaviour Week of Action and a healthy number of reviews being received and progressed as below:

ASB Case Review Applications Summary since Oct21	Oct21 - Jun 23			
	West	BMS	Ipswich	East
Didn't meet threshold	8	3	4	8
Case review carried out	12	5	8	15
Total number of applications received	20	8	12	23
ASB Case Appeal Applications	0	3	0	7

2.7 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 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, injunctions 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 from 22nd March 2023 to 6th October 2023:

ORDER	TOTAL	Difference from last reporting period
Community Protection Notice Warning Letters (CPNWL)	48	↓ 53
Community Protection Notice (CPN)	21	↓ 28
Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO)*	5	↓ 1
Injunctions**	2	↔ 0

* CBOs that have been granted at court

** Injunctions obtained by police as lead agency

The reduction in civil orders over the last period is being reviewed by the ASB team. Early analysis does show some of the reduction can be attributed to inconsistency in recording but there have been occasions where opportunities may have been missed. This will be a focus during the next reporting period, and we anticipate significant improvements in time for the next Accountability and Performance Panel report which is scheduled for May 2024.

2.8 Examples of Organisational Growth

Example 1 – A family living in an end terrace house next to a heavily used footpath that connected the town with the main housing estates were the targets of ASB. Persons were knocking and running away from the property due to being able to reach over their wall and do this from the path. This began to escalate with objects being left outside the door and there was also a rise in ASB in the entire close with graffiti being sprayed on signs and in the alleyways behind the houses.

It was identified a multi-agency approach was the best option to target the issue. The housing provider was engaged and explored options to target harden the address and make it more difficult for ASB to be committed. Council and housing were tasked with cleaning up graffiti and making the area more presentable and the police organised ‘street meet’ days on the close. For this they set up a gazebo in the close and had members from the town council, West Suffolk Council, housing provider and district councillors attend to talk to residents about ongoing issues.

Police obtained covert cameras for the address to start to identify suspects and were able to identify 14 different youths involved. On each occasion a youth was identified they would be visited at home with their parents present to discuss the matter and the school for each child was made aware. Once a child was seen to commit further ASB after being spoken to with parents, they were formally interviewed under caution for harassment and YJS became involved. Once this happened with one child the ASB at the address by the youths stopped completely.

Through extensive CCTV trawls a suspect was identified for the spray painting in this and other areas and this was found to be unconnected. They were known for previous issues of ASB and had previously been the main antagonist of ASB in the locality. They were subsequently interviewed and will be going through the court process in due course.

The result is there have been no further reports of ASB in the close, and the family are able to live their lives without constant interruptions and the stress of targeted ASB.

Example 2 – A privately owned hotel in Ipswich town centre, which is undergoing renovation, was being used by persons acting in an anti-social manner including using the premises for drug related activities. This was impacting the quality of life for the local community, as well as the economic business community. This is a hotel which is also acts as emergency housing for vulnerable persons in need.

As part of the problem-solving plan, a joint visit to the hotel was carried out with Design Out Crime Officers (DOCOs) resulting in a report containing numerous recommendations for improvements.

Increased patrols around the area were utilised to prevent offending and increase the chances of catching offenders, whilst questionnaires to neighbouring businesses helped develop information and intel gathering.

Partners were approached to support reducing the number of vulnerable persons being temporarily housed at the hotel which in turn reduced the payoff to owners and encourages those previously reluctant to do so, to work in partnership with agencies to resolve issues.

The multi- agency approach with stakeholders including police, fire, council departments, local businesses ensured that this issue could be resolved long term, and this was governed and monitored through monthly meetings. Although this issue is to date not completely resolved, the use of good tactics and tools from all partners has resulted in decrease in ASB and progress continues.

Example 3 – Live operation running to tackle issues relating to ongoing youth ASB in the town centre of Lowestoft. The issue cuts across the commercial area of the town centre and the residential estate that sits behind it.

A detailed Patrol plan has been written and utilised to focus our time/resources in the right areas, with ASB hotspots identified and pulse patrols conducted.

Allocated dedicated officers including the Kestrel team (community proactive team) to the problem/area for continuity and visibility, reasons to discourage the ongoing behaviours.

Section 34/35 dispersal have been utilised on occasions to good effect.

There is ongoing work with partners, CCTV staff, business community and repeat victims to continue to further reduce activity. Shops have issued banning notices with the help and support of police.

ASB case review (Community trigger) meetings have taken place regarding ongoing ASB at an Orbit Housing owned block of flats. Additional work conducted with the adult vulnerable community to prevent youths targeting them.

Overall policing activity has helped to reduce the amount of demand recorded, and ultimately displacing the impact these behaviours are having on the community.

3. NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME – RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

3.1 The investigative response and oversight of residential burglary offences (dwellings) remains the responsibility of the Crime, Incident and Safeguarding command (CSIM) with local Detective managers managing performance. Any trends, series offences of prolific offenders are managed through local policing and force tasking and performance management structures.

3.2 Home office guidance on reporting and recording crime and incidents now defines 'Residential' as any buildings within the boundary of the property. This definition includes dwellings and other buildings such as sheds or garages, though does not include a building

used solely for a business reason (home office). The changes have been in place for around 12 months and Suffolk Constabulary ensured that it is able to differentiate between offences where someone's home is subject to a burglary and those where a shed or other building is broken into. While both can have a negative effect on victims it is accepted that a home being broken into can have a higher effect on victims than where a building for storage or other use is entered.

- 3.3 The changes to the crime classification have not affected the ability to compare data over the last 12 months, however it has affected the ability to compare current figures against the long-term average. This is being addressed by the Strategic Business and Operational Services Department, however the long-term average is not available for this report.
- 3.4 The solved rate for residential burglary (dwellings) is 15.4%, an increase from 13.2% over the last 12 months. The figures confirm a reduction in burglary dwelling offences at a time more of the population is returning to the workplace post covid. The solved rate has seen an increase to over 15% which remains positive.

Residential Burglary Dwellings	Last 12 Months	Previous 12 Months	% Difference against Previous 12 Months
Offences Recorded	697	772	-9.7%
Number solved	107	102	4.9%
% Solved	15.4%	13.2%	2.2%

- 3.5 There have been no significant linked crime series for residential burglary.
- 3.6 A focus remains on burglary dwelling, the current approach has resulted in a positive solved rate and reviews have demonstrated there is no requirement to change the current deployment or allocation procedures. These offences are primarily investigated by detectives in the CID teams within each SPC, there have been national and local challenges in the recruitment and retention of detectives which has seen the teams operating below their full-time establishment (FTE) strengths. The recruitment of Direct Entry Detectives and the national uplift in police numbers has seen an increase in detective numbers which in turn has increased capacity and enabled performance to be maintained and improved.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME – ROBBERY

- 4.1 The number of robbery offences has seen a reduction in both the long-term average and from the preceding 12 months, the solved rate has a modest increase of 0.1%.

4.2

Robbery	Last 12 Months	Long Term Ave	% Difference (L12M to LTA)	Previous 12 months	% Difference (P12M to L12M)
Offences Recorded	229	280	-18.2%	311	-26.4%
Number Solved	45	55	18.2%	53	15.1%
Percentage Solved	19.7%	19.6%	0.1%	17.0%	2.7%

- 4.3 Where there are identified issues specific workstream is implemented to better understand the challenges and issues and build a problem-solving solution, an example is the current robbery situation in Ipswich Central where there has been a higher than expected number of

offences (62) in the year. Each offence is reviewed to establish common factors, opportunities to prevent and detect the offences and crime prevention methods which could be employed.

4.4 The Constabulary engages with Operation Calibre (National Robbery Prevention and Detection), in December 2022 a week of action to arrest and prosecute robbery offenders (wanted and having committed recent offences) took place within the County. There remain very low levels of reported offending in this crime type, with less than an offence a day reported on average. The engagement in Operation Calibre and the daily scrutiny of robbery offences within performance meetings has kept a focus on the offences and maintained a healthy position in relation to recorded crime and solved rates.

5. NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME – THEFT OF AND THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE

5.1 Theft of motor vehicle remains a statistically small compared to the number of vehicles within the county. The number of offences and solved rate have remained steady throughout the year with a 6.8% decrease in reported offences in the last 12 months.

TOMV	Last 12 Months	Long Term Ave	% Difference (L12M to LTA)	Previous 12 months	% Difference (P12M to L12M)
Offences Recorded	520	558	-6.8%	503	3.4%
Number Solved	62	64	-3.1%	58	6.9%
Percentage Solved	11.9%	11.5%	-0.4%	11.5%	0.4%

5.2 Theft from motor vehicle remains a difficult offence to solve, offences tend to be opportunist and committed at times where there are limited evidential opportunities. Each case is assessed for any opportunities and where offenders are identified they are referred to the Converter T in respect of other offences taken into consideration (TIC's)

5.3 Theft of Motor and from motor vehicle generally is a lower threat and risk offence and as such THRIVE (Threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability, and engagement) assessments would place this offence type below violent crime and some other acquisitive crime. The Constabulary will always review and assess reported vehicle crime for opportunities to achieve a positive outcome for victims, however other crime types may take priority where there is conflicting demand.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD CRIME – RETAIL THEFT / SHOPLIFTING

6.1 Retail theft has featured recently in both local and national media, with some retailers reporting large losses. Whilst there have been some reports in Suffolk, and there has been a marginal increase in reporting over the last 12 months, this is still -6% less than predicted. Suffolk has the lowest increase within the Eastern Region, and there is no current intelligence to suggest that offending is linked to Serious Organised Crime in Suffolk.

6.2 Suffolk Constabulary will continue to support businesses and retailers to protect themselves from this sort of crime and is able to offer tailored advice through the deployment of Design Out Crime Officers (DOCOs). We will also support partners in providing support to communities, as evidence suggests that the increase in offending is likely linked to 'cost of living' and the current financial difficulties many people find themselves in.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None identified.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK

8.1 None identified.

9. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION

9.1 The paper reports on the improvements in performance and appropriate focus on key areas of Neighbourhood Crime and ASB, which was recognised in the HMICFRS PEEL report for 2023-2025 grading of “Good”.

9.2 Our Op Converter team continue to support this performance, targeting offenders and solving outstanding offences. Since January 2023 they have solved an additional 270 crimes through the TIC (taken into consideration) process.

9.3 The Constabulary has demonstrated significant development in our risk response to ASB, our reductions in volume of burglary residential and robbery, whilst maintaining positive solved rates. Moving forward greater focus will be placed upon improving our longer-term problem-solving approach to ASB personal, along with improvements in our use of preventative orders.

9.4 The County Policing Command is about to go through key change to deliver improvements in the way we engage with our communities. New Community Policing Teams, supported by a County Partnership and Prevention Hub will launch on 4th December 2023 providing greater focus longer term multi-agency problem solving activities. Close monitoring and evaluation is being put in place to assist in understanding and recognising the benefits this will bring.