



National Audit Office

THE HOME OFFICE

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

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Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

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5 December 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 Anti-social behaviour encompasses a broad range of behaviours including nuisance behaviour, intimidation and vandalism.¹ On average 17 per cent of the population perceive high levels of anti-social behaviour in their area with the young and the less well off being disproportionately affected.² The cost to government agencies of responding to reports of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales is approximately £3.4 billion per year and there are significant indirect and emotional costs as well. The Home Office's Anti-Social Behaviour Unit is a small policy unit which in

the period 2003-06 covered primarily by this report had an annual budget of around £25 million to drive forward local action as set out in the Together anti-social behaviour action plan. In September 2005 the Government announced the creation of the Respect Task Force to take forward the anti-social behaviour agenda in conjunction with the Unit and subsequently, in January 2006, published the Respect Action Plan.³ The Government is currently considering further legislation to address anti-social behaviour and take forward the Respect Agenda.

1 These behaviours are described more fully in paragraph 1.2 and Figure 2.
2 Home Office, *British Crime Survey 2005-06*.
3 The work of the Respect Task Force is not examined within this report.

2 This report examines the work of the Home Office's Anti-Social Behaviour Unit set up in 2003 and measures introduced by the Home Office since 1997 to enable the police, local authorities and others to tackle anti-social behaviour and considers the progress made. Our principal methods are set out in **Figure 1 overleaf** and a more detailed methodology is set out in Appendix 1.

3 We used our sample of cases to determine the apparent impact of the intervention applied in each case in terms of whether there was evidence of further anti-social behaviour within the period covered by the case file review, and if so, after how long, and what further intervention then occurred. In practice, it is possible that other factors unrelated to the intervention, such as changes in family circumstances for example, may have contributed partly or wholly to changes in behaviour. We are not therefore able to draw conclusions as to whether other forms of intervention or no intervention would have achieved the same or better outcome. Nevertheless, our case file review, together with discussions with Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators and perpetrators, suggests interventions can be a contributory factor in deterring further anti-social behaviour, particularly if other support is also provided.

Overall conclusion

4 The majority of people in our sample who received an anti-social behaviour intervention did not re-engage in anti-social behaviour, bringing some respite to the community. There was, however, a hard core of perpetrators for whom interventions had limited impact. The absence of formal evaluation by the Home Office of the success of different interventions and of the impact of providing support services in conjunction with interventions prevents local areas targeting interventions in the most efficient way to achieve the best outcome for the least cost. International research⁴ suggests preventive programmes, including education, counselling and training are cost effective methods of addressing anti-social behaviour and the Home Office is addressing this issue through the Respect Action Plan which was outside the scope of this report.

5 Our key findings were as follows:

a The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit has successfully supported local areas through funding 373 Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators to co-ordinate local strategy, promoting the use of new tools and powers



and providing training to practitioners. Whilst 21 per cent of the population perceived high levels of anti-social behaviour in 2002-03 this figure had shown a statistically significant decrease to 17 per cent by 2005-06. Perceptions vary significantly by area, however, with 29 per cent of people in London perceiving anti social behaviour as a problem compared to seven per cent in Lincolnshire and Essex⁵.

- b Based on our case review sample, many individuals are responsible for relatively minor incidents of anti-social behaviour and quickly desist from such behaviour. Some 65 per cent of our sample received only one intervention. About 46 per cent of our cases were aged under 18 and 54 per cent were over 18.
- c A small core of people, however, repeatedly engages in anti-social behaviour. Around 20 per cent of our sample received 55 per cent of all interventions issued in the period covered by the files in our review. This group also had an average of 50 criminal convictions in comparison to 24 convictions for those in our total sample with convictions.
- d There is variation in the use of different interventions which primarily reflects the severity of the intervention and the behaviour which it is intended to address⁶, with Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators and others typically increasing the severity of interventions if the behaviour continues. However, our area visits suggested that in some cases Co-ordinators and others were more likely to use interventions which related to their background or local preference rather than there being a clear relationship to the behaviour exhibited.

4 Rubin et al, *Interventions to reduce anti-social behaviour and crime*, Rand Europe for the National Audit Office, September 2006.

5 Home Office, *British Crime Survey 2005-06*.

6 Inconsistencies in the data provided to the Home Office may also account for some of the variation.

1 Our sources of evidence in carrying out this examination

Method

- Review of 893 case files in 6 local areas
- Structured interviews with Anti-social Behaviour Coordinators in 12 local areas
- Costing seminars in 12 local areas
- Focus groups with members of the public in 6 local areas²
- Semi-structured interviews with 20 individuals who have received anti-social behaviour interventions
- Literature review
- Expert opinion through a Reference Panel

Purpose

- To gather primary data on the use of anti-social behaviour interventions and the individuals who receive them.¹ To gather the evidence to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. We did not extrapolate to the national population on the basis of this sample.
- To establish the means through which local anti-social behaviour strategies are devised and delivered and hear about Co-ordinators' experience of working with the Home Office. Furthermore to identify key barriers and enablers in using the different interventions.
- To gather evidence on the multi-agency processes for delivering six anti-social behaviour interventions and to estimate the associated costs in terms of staff time.
- To assess the extent to which there are shared local priorities for tackling anti-social behaviour and to gauge public awareness and support for the strategy for tackling anti-social behaviour locally.
- To assess the perceptions of interventions from those receiving them and identify gaps in provision and support from the perspective of those engaging in anti-social behaviour.
- To assess the available evidence on the effectiveness of preventive schemes and cost savings resulting from diverting a potential perpetrator from a life of anti-social behaviour or crime.
- To provide expert advice throughout the study including a review of the methodology.

Source: National Audit Office

NOTES

- 1 The report does not attempt to consider whether alternative interventions should have been used in individual circumstances. It was not possible to carry out time series analysis looking at incidents of anti-social behaviour before and after an intervention because complete data was not available on file.
- 2 Our focus groups were composed of a range of individuals in each area designed to provide a range of experiences across all areas. The individuals were selected through quota sampling. For further details please see Appendix 1: Methodology.

e Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are the most frequently used intervention for which data is available.⁷ 65 per cent of the people in our sample who received an Acceptable Behaviour Contract did not re-engage in anti-social behaviour. However Contracts were less effective with people aged under 18 where just over 60 per cent of our cases displayed further anti-social behaviour. This outcome could be due to a failure to engage the young person sufficiently in forming a contract and to support them, for example in disengaging from the society of certain of their peers.

f 63 per cent of the people in our sample who received a warning letter desisted from anti-social behaviour. The 37 per cent who did not respond positively to the intervention, however, re-engaged in anti-social behaviour much more quickly than those who had re-engaged in anti-social behaviour after an Acceptable Behaviour Contract or an Anti-Social Behaviour Order. Warning letters had most effect with young people with around 62 per cent of under 18 year olds receiving no further interventions. Warning letters are also the cheapest intervention costing approximately £66 compared to £230 for an Acceptable Behaviour Contract and £3,100 for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order.^{8, 9}

7 Refer to Figure 9 for more detail.

8 Based on seminars in 12 local areas involving practitioners from a range of agencies including the police and local authorities. The cost does not include the cost of other support services which may be provided in conjunction with the intervention e.g. youth projects or drug rehabilitation schemes, nor does it include the cost of policing the intervention. Court costs are included but legal aid costs are not. The number of hearings required for the legal interventions will have a significant impact on the cost of the intervention. Stand alone Anti-Social Behaviour Orders are likely to be more costly than Orders on Conviction which are secured at the same time as the hearing for a criminal offence.

9 The outcomes for the three interventions are not directly comparable since different interventions are used in different circumstances. Warning letters are generally used for relatively minor acts of anti-social behaviour and are unlikely to be effective for more serious incidents.

- g** Just under a quarter of our sample had received an Anti-Social Behaviour Order of whom 40 per cent had received an earlier intervention and 80 per cent had criminal convictions. Thirty eight per cent of the recipients were under 18 and 85 per cent were male. Of all those in our sample who re-engaged in anti-social behaviour individuals who had received Anti-Social Behaviour Orders took longer to re-engage than either those who received warning letters or Acceptable Behaviour Contracts.
- h** Just over half of our sample cases breached their Anti-Social Behaviour Order, with a third of this group doing so on five or more occasions.¹⁰ However, some of the breaches could relate to breaking one or more of the prohibitions of the Order, for example entering a prohibited area, rather than committing further anti-social behaviour. Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators we spoke with suggested that a lack of capacity and experience of using anti-social behaviour legislation within local government legal services departments meant breaches were not always dealt with in a timely manner, frustrating the local community. The unwillingness of witnesses to give oral evidence at hearings for fear of reprisals was also considered a factor.

- Encourage all agencies administering interventions to provide targeted support to increase individuals' chances of meeting the conditions of the intervention, preventing further anti-social behaviour and potentially costs in the longer term.
- Make training available, through the Academies programme, to organisations which carry out anti-social behaviour interventions but have limited experience of dealing with young people and people with complex needs. This should enable organisations to engage constructively with such people about how they can meet the conditions of the intervention.
- Work with the Respect Task Force as the Government implements the Respect Action Plan, to undertake formal evaluation of the different schemes to build up an evidence base on the cost and effectiveness of different interventions.

To encourage greater working and information sharing across local areas the Home Office should:

- Enable local areas to benchmark their effectiveness against others (for example, by providing information to Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships on others with similar characteristics).

Recommendations

To encourage the most effective use of interventions the Home Office should:

- Encourage local areas to improve their case management systems sufficiently to collect comprehensive and comparable case information including information on age, gender, date of birth and ethnicity. This will enable local areas to monitor the effectiveness of the interventions they use and the Home Office to build up a greater understanding of the effectiveness of different interventions in different situations and with different people.

To encourage local communities to feel more confident in their ability to address anti-social behaviour in their area the Home Office should:

- Develop a strategy to support local areas to communicate more creatively to their local communities the efforts they are making to tackle anti-social behaviour, to reach all groups, and to provide feedback on actions taken to the victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour.
- Encourage local areas to provide a consistent level of support to victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour in all areas of the country.

¹⁰ The data relating to warning letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts comes from our own case review, but data on breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders comes from matching our sample against the Police National Computer which contains information on everybody who has received a criminal conviction, including the breach of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order. There is however sometimes a time lag for court records containing information about convictions to be updated on to the Police National Computer. See Appendix 1, Paragraph 1.5 for a more detailed explanation of how the proportion engaging in anti-social behaviour was calculated.

PART ONE

The Home Office and local agencies are working together to tackle anti-social behaviour

1.1 This Part of the report examines what behaviour is defined as “anti-social”, who does it and to whom. It also considers how effectively the Home Office and local agencies have worked in partnership to address the needs of their local communities in tackling anti-social behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour includes a wide variety of behaviours

1.2 Anti-social behaviour encompasses a broad range of behaviours, defined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as, “behaviour which causes, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not in the same household [as himself]”.¹¹ The Home Office has produced a typology of behaviours seen as anti-social¹² through a ‘one day count’ (see Appendix 2). Our focus groups with members of the public in six areas around the country supported the Home Office’s view of behaviours considered to be anti-social. Our review of a sample of the case files from six local areas of 893 individuals¹³ who received interventions to deter them from anti-social behaviour showed that the main behaviour against which action was taken was “nuisance behaviour” (Figure 2).

1.3 Anti-social behaviour impacts adversely on people’s quality of life. For example, of those that had experienced problems with drunken or rowdy behaviour in a sample of the British Crime Survey in 2004-05, 26 per cent said that they avoided certain places in their local area as a result of the behaviour.¹⁴ Most of the participants at our focus groups in six local areas said that they were intimidated when going into town on a Friday or Saturday night because of fear of disorder and violence.

Anti-social behaviour has high monetary and emotional costs for society

1.4 Anti-social behaviour is costly for individuals, families, communities, businesses and government.¹⁵ The Home Office have estimated that the cost to government agencies of dealing with reports of anti-social behaviour is £3.4 billion a year.¹⁶ (Further evidence on the cost of individual interventions is included in Part 3). Once the costs borne by others are included this estimate rises significantly. For example, the annual cost to victims of criminal damage alone is estimated to be £1.2 billion.¹⁷ Indirect costs of anti-social behaviour are borne by society, for example, the effect on local businesses, the disruption to public transport and the effect on house prices or insurance premiums. There is also an emotional cost for victims of anti-social behaviour such as anxiety and depression, which they may suffer for years.¹⁸ Significant monetary and emotional savings could therefore be made if anti-social behaviour were reduced.

“I was travelling by bus going to [town] at night and just before the bus set off they put a bottle full of liquid was thrown [in] and the [glass] just was shattered on the back. I think the driver was frightened to stop, he didn’t stop, he kept going and he stopped somewhere close to the estate ... I’m sure he must have made a report of it but I don’t know what is being [done].”

Source: Male aged over 35 at an NAO focus group in Manchester held in August 2006

11 Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

12 The typology was tested in Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.

13 See Methodology Appendix for details of the numbers of files examined in each of the areas we visited.

14 Based on adults who perceived very/fairly big problems in the local area with the type of anti-social behaviour and who experienced that behaviour in the past 12 months. Source: Upson, A., Perceptions and experience of anti-social behaviour, findings from the 2003/2004 British Crime Survey (supplementary table A4.15).

15 LSE, The Economic and Social Costs of Anti-Social Behaviour: A Review, Whitehead et al, October 2003.

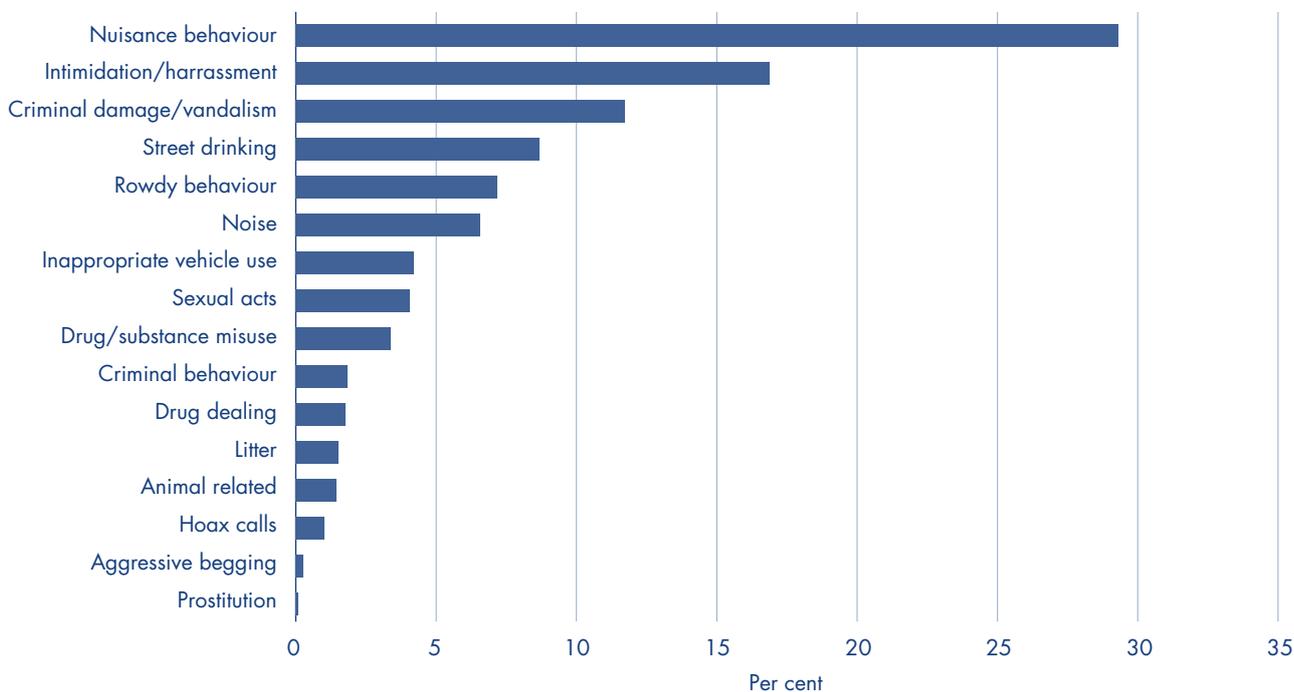
16 Home Office, Defining and measuring anti-social behaviour, 2004.

17 Home Office, The Economic and Social Costs of Crime against individuals and households, 2003-04.

18 What works for Victims and Witnesses of Anti-Social Behaviour (Hunter et al), 2004.

2 Nuisance behaviour is the behaviour against which action was most commonly taken

Breakdown of behaviours displayed by the 893 people within our case review



Source: National Audit Office

There are strong links between anti-social behaviour and crime

1.5 Although anti-social behaviour does not always constitute an offence, there is a strong link between high levels of anti-social behaviour and high levels of crime. The Home Office has stated that anti-social behaviour creates an environment in which more serious crime can take place and the Audit Commission found that anti-social behaviour was an important influence on the public's fear of crime.¹⁹ Thirty seven per cent of the people in our sample who had received an intervention to deter them from engaging in anti-social behaviour had also received at least one criminal conviction, with an average of 24 each. There was a significant range in the extent of previous criminality contained in our sample, with the number of criminal convictions that people had received ranging from zero to 271.

Anti-social behaviour disproportionately affects the young and worst off in society

1.6 Some groups are more likely to perceive higher levels of anti-social behaviour than others. In 2005-06, 17 per cent of the total population perceived there to be high levels of anti-social behaviour in their area²⁰, but figures were considerably higher for those living in an "hard pressed"²¹ area (32 per cent); living in socially rented housing (30 per cent); female and aged between 16 and 24 (28 per cent) or from an ethnic minority (26 per cent). A higher proportion of younger people and people living in less well off areas perceived high levels of anti-social behaviour than those in older age groups or living in wealthier areas.²² Participants in our focus groups who were from less wealthy areas perceived anti-social behaviour to be a greater problem than those from more affluent areas although all agreed that anti-social behaviour was an issue where they lived.

¹⁹ Audit Commission, *Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour: Making places safer through improved community working*, May 2006.

²⁰ Home Office, *Crime in England and Wales 2005-06*, July 2006.

²¹ "Hard pressed" is the least well off of five categories under the ACORN classification. ACORN stands for "A classification of residential neighbourhoods" and is derived by combining geography with demographics, thus creating a tool for understanding different types of people across the UK.

²² <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosb1206chap3.xls>

“Well, when they asked me [about anti-social behaviour in my area] I thought, wow, I don’t know, no more than most places, but then at the same time I started reeling off half a dozen things and I thought, well, yeah, it is. Now you’ve asked us and I’ve thought about it there’s half a dozen things I’ve just told you without even thinking about it!”

Source: Female aged 21 – 35 at NAO focus group in Easington held in August 2006

Anti-social behaviour is not just related to young people, but we found young men to be the largest group involved

1.7 A broad range of individuals of all ages are involved in anti-social behaviour. We randomly selected and reviewed the case files of 893 people who received anti-social behaviour interventions from Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators in six areas of the country. The interventions we examined were those received within the period the file covered, and were primarily warning letters, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.²³ Our case review found that a range of ages were involved in anti-social behaviour, but that men were much more likely to engage in anti-social behaviour than women (**Figure 3**).

A small number of people are responsible for a disproportionate amount of anti-social behaviour

1.8 Many individuals are responsible for relatively minor incidents of anti-social behaviour and quickly desist from such behaviour. Our case review showed that 65 per cent of our sample only received one intervention (see **Figure 4**). The most common behaviours displayed by these people were nuisance behaviour (33 per cent) and intimidation/harassment (19 per cent) and the most common intervention they received was a warning letter (56 per cent). However, a relatively small core of people repeatedly engages in anti-social behaviour, causing distress to those affected. Approximately 20 per cent of the people in our sample received 55 per cent of all the interventions issued in the period covered by the files,

indicating they were responsible for a disproportionately large amount of anti-social behaviour. This group also had an average of 50 criminal convictions in comparison to 24 convictions amongst those in our overall sample with criminal histories. Case Example 1 demonstrates how the actions of a few individuals impacted on a large number of the residents in Liverpool who felt so intimidated that they stopped using their own bus station.

1.9 Responsibility for tackling the causes and effects of anti-social behaviour is spread across multiple agencies and society more generally. Below is a list of some of the actions the Government has taken to address the problem of anti-social behaviour and to enable local public services to respond to the problems which their communities face:

- providing communities with tools and powers to tackle anti-social behaviour (paragraph 1.10);
- establishing the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit to drive forward action at a local level (paragraph 1.11); and
- making it mandatory for local areas to monitor their effectiveness at tackling anti-social behaviour (paragraph 1.13).

CASE EXAMPLE 1

Liverpool bus station

Liverpool City Council obtained Anti-Social Behaviour Orders against a gang of six young men who consistently hung around Liverpool bus station and central shopping centre with Rottweilers intimidating the general public with the dogs and swearing at passers by. They were also taking the dogs on to local buses scaring the drivers and passengers. The situation escalated to such an extent that local bus drivers felt intimidated when entering the bus station and people avoided going to the bus station by catching the bus from elsewhere in the city.

In March 2005 the gang were given warning letters telling them not to continue their behaviour. However, the warning letters were ineffective and in May 2005 they were given Anti-Social Behaviour Orders which banned them from the bus station, the shopping centre and certain bus routes. They have abided by the conditions of the Orders and people in Liverpool can now use the bus station without fear of being harassed.

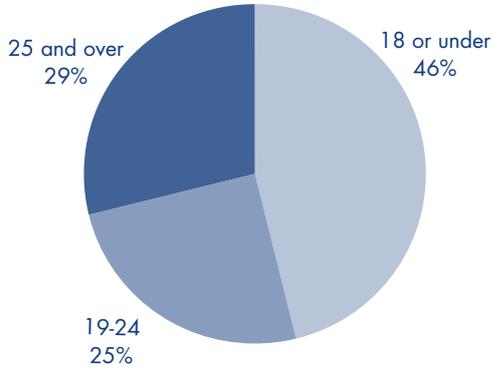
Source: National Audit Office interview with Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator

²³ We selected files on a random basis from two case lists supplied by Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinators. The first case list was those that had received warning letters and the second case list was those that had received Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. This method ensured that we looked at a range of cases across the spectrum of severity. For more details please see Appendix 1: Methodology.

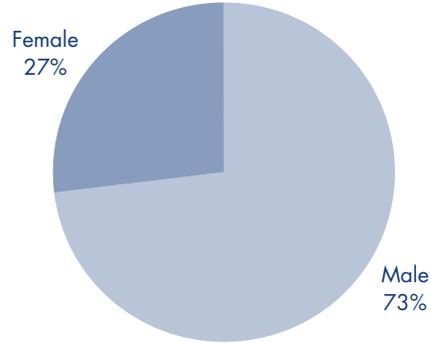
3 Young men are most likely to perpetrate anti-social behaviour

A breakdown by gender and age of the people who received interventions in our case review¹

Age



Gender



	Female	Male	Total
18 or under	55	199	254
19-24	27	114	141
25 and over	50	125	175
Total	132	438	570

Source: National Audit Office

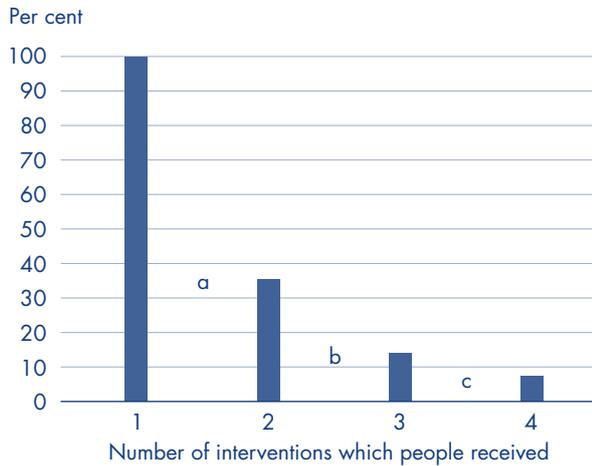
NOTES

1 Excludes cases for which information on age and gender was not available.

2 Base: Gender information was available for 834 cases (94 per cent of the sample) and age information for 603 cases (68 per cent of the sample). The 570 cases in the table refer to those for whom information on both gender and age was available.

4 65 per cent of people only receive one intervention

The percentage of people within the 893 cases receiving intervention



Source: National Audit Office

NOTE

- a 65 per cent of people desisted from anti-social behaviour after Intervention 1
- b 85 per cent of people desisted from anti-social behaviour after Intervention 2
- c 93 per cent of people desisted from anti-social behaviour after Intervention 3

The Home Office has provided communities with tools and powers to tackle anti-social behaviour

1.10 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created a statutory requirement for local authorities, police and other responsible authorities in the community to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour at a local level. (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, and in Wales as Community Safety Partnerships). The Act required those partnerships to ascertain their communities' priorities for tackling crime and disorder, and to formulate a strategy for addressing them.²⁴ Appendix 5 shows the complex delivery chain linking central government, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and the bodies responsible for delivering policy on the ground. Since 1996, the Government has passed legislation introducing a range of both statutory and non-statutory tools and powers for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to use, as set out in **Figure 5**.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit has driven forward local action

1.11 In 2003, there was considerable variation in the effort which local areas were dedicating to tackling anti-social behaviour²⁵ and the extent to which infrastructures were in place locally to respond to the problem. Furthermore, relatively little was understood about the impact of anti-social behaviour on communities. In recognition of this, the high levels of perceptions of anti-social behaviour and the fact that the multiple agencies responsible for tackling anti-social behaviour on the ground were often not working together effectively, the Home Office formed the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit. The Unit has had an annual budget of around £25 million to design and implement the government's policy on anti-social behaviour. It has worked rapidly to drive forwards local action to tackle anti-social behaviour. The key actions of the Unit since 2003 have been:

- To fund a network of 373 anti-social behaviour co-ordinators: one in each Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to encourage effective joint action between agencies at a local level.
- To develop and refine a range of tools and powers which could be used by local areas to respond to anti-social behaviour.

- To run the "Together" campaign, a resourceful approach, working directly with local practitioners through training "Academies" to increase their ability to use the new powers available to them. Around 10,000 practitioners have been supported and trained so far.
- To take targeted action within 10 "Trailblazers" and 50 "Action Areas" to support the local authorities in tackling issues which are particular problems within the area (see Appendix 4).
- To improve reporting of anti-social behaviour from the public through the "It's your call" campaign.
- To provide practical support to practitioners and communities affected by anti-social behaviour through initiatives such as the Together website and advice line and the "Taking a Stand Awards" which recognise the contribution of individuals who have stood up to anti-social behaviour within their community. The Together Actionline has taken over 19,400 enquiries since its launch in 2004 and the website has received over 295,000 visitors and 1.8 million page hits since June 2004.

There are many funding streams which impact on anti-social behaviour

1.12 The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit funding of around £25 million is a small proportion of the total amount of funding for tackling anti-social behaviour. The Safer and Stronger Communities Fund is funded jointly by the Home Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government. It comprises £600 million to be spent across the period 2005 to 2008 to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and drugs, to empower communities and to improve the conditions of streets and public spaces. The Department for Communities and Local Government also funds the New Deal for Communities and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund both of which aim to tackle deprivation in the poorest areas in the country. **Figure 6 on page 14** shows the funding streams that feed into the Safer and Stronger Communities strand of Local Area Agreements.²⁶ The police, schools, social services, registered social landlords, Youth Offending Teams and mental health trusts also have a major role in tackling anti-social behaviour. Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators must liaise with all these partners to work effectively.

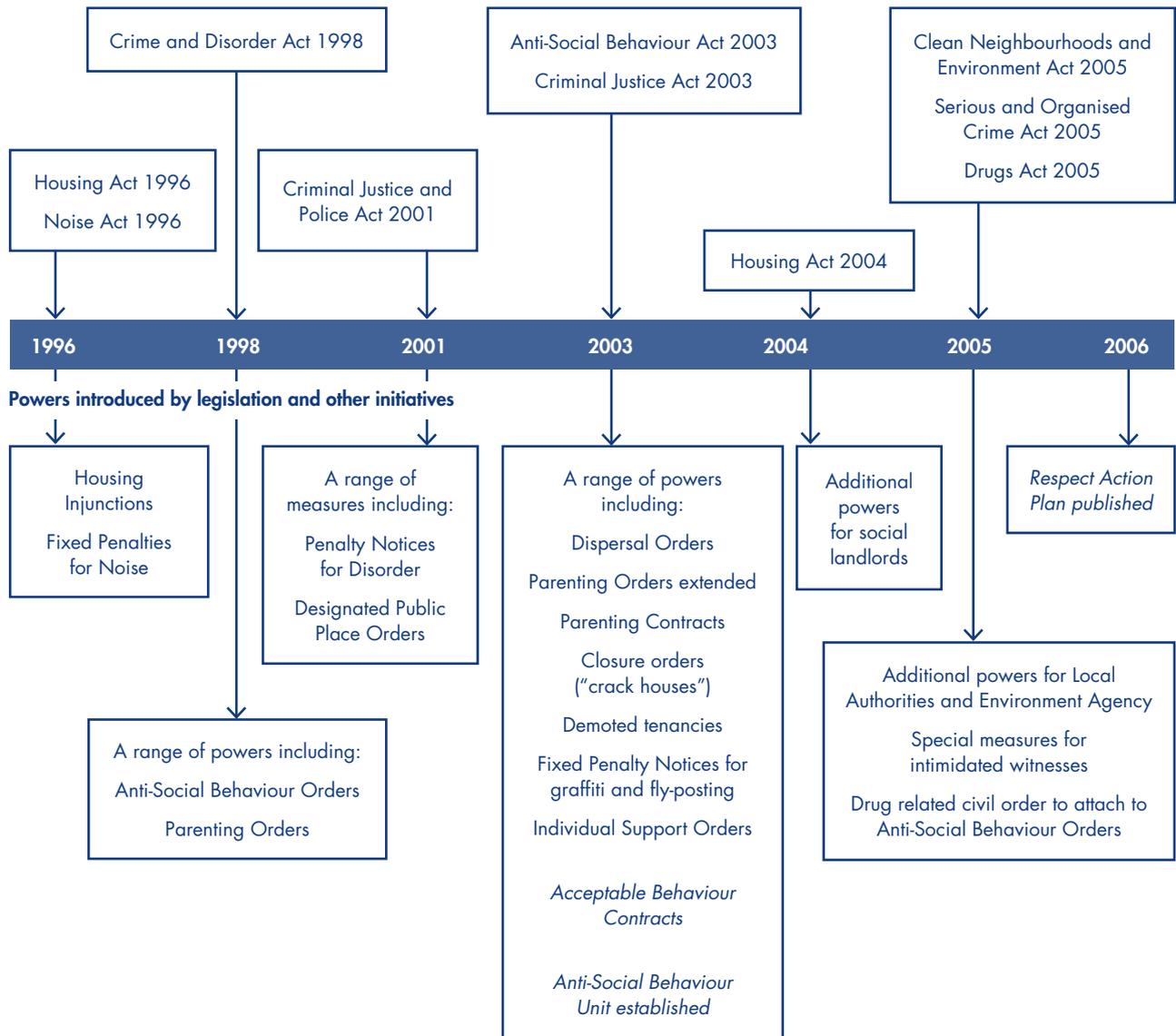
²⁴ The effectiveness of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in reducing vehicle crime was examined in our reports *Reducing Vehicle Crime*, HC 183, 2004-05 and *Reducing Crime: The Home Office working with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships*, HC16, 2004-05.

²⁵ Home Office, *Together: Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour*, 2003.

²⁶ Local Area Agreements are three-year funding agreements between central and local government which set out the priorities for a local area. They simplify some central funding, help join-up public services and provide for greater local flexibility over funding decisions.

5 The introduction of new interventions

Legislation

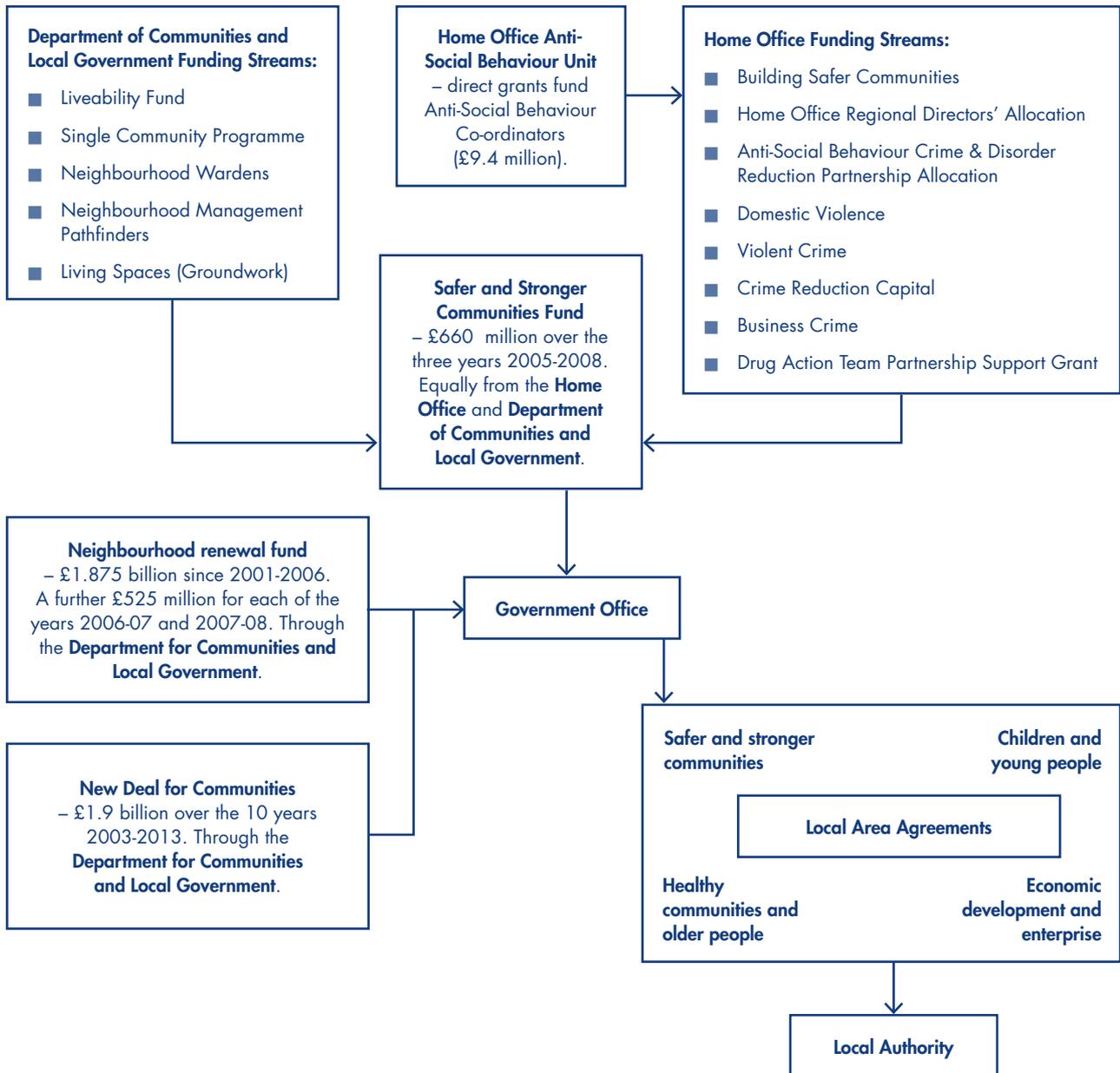


Source: National Audit Office

NOTE

Italics denote non-legislative powers and initiatives.

6 Funding streams for tackling anti-social behaviour



Source: National Audit Office

Local areas are increasingly being measured on their effectiveness at tackling anti-social behaviour

1.13 Monitoring of local areas' success in tackling anti-social behaviour is improving. By April 2007 all top-tier local authorities are required as part of their Local Area Agreement priority-setting process to have an outcome related to building respect and reducing anti-social behaviour. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to re-consider their strategy for fighting crime and tackling anti-social behaviour at least every three years. Since 2003-04 questions about anti-social behaviour have been included in the Local Government User Satisfaction Survey²⁷ and anti-social behaviour now features within the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment. Reducing perceptions of anti-social behaviour is assessed within the Police Performance Assessment Framework and is a baseline assessment for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. Nevertheless, Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators find it difficult to benchmark their effectiveness because of the diverse nature of the areas in which they operate. Figure 12 highlights some of the differences between the six local areas which we visited during the study.

There has been a fall in perceived levels of anti-social behaviour

1.14 The Home Office's second Public Service Agreement target is to reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System without compromising fairness.²⁸ The Home Secretary shares responsibility for these targets with the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and the Attorney General. The measure is aimed at achieving a reduction in the proportion of people who believe anti-social behaviour to be a big or fairly big problem.²⁹ The British Crime Survey shows that the Home Office is already ahead of its target: the percentage of the population who think that anti-social behaviour is a very or fairly big problem in their area has decreased from a high of 21 per cent in 2002-03 to 17 per cent in 2005-06 (Figure 7).

7 The percentage of those perceiving high levels of anti-social behaviour in their area has reduced since 2002-03

Percentage of people perceiving high levels of anti-social behaviour across seven strands and total

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
<i>Total perceiving high levels of anti-social behaviour</i>	19	21*	16*	17	17
Abandoned or burnt-out cars	20	25	15*	12*	10*
Noisy neighbours or loud cars	10	10	9*	9	10*
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	22	23*	19*	22*	24*
People using or dealing drugs	31	32	25*	26	27
Teenagers hanging around on the streets	32	33*	27*	31*	32*
Rubbish or litter lying around	32	33*	29*	30	30
Vandalism, graffiti or other	34	35	28*	28	29

Source: *Crime in England and Wales 2005/2006*, Walker et al, Home Office 2006
For full details consult *Crime in England and Wales 2005/2006*, Walker et al, Home Office 2006, http://uk.sitestat.com/homeoffice/homeoffice/s?rds_hosb1206pdf&ns_type=pdf&ns_url=%5Bhttp://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosb1206.pdf%5D

NOTE

* indicates a statistically significant change from previous year at the five per cent confidence level. The total is derived from responses to the seven individual strands of anti-social behaviour reported in the table.

27 Every three years, all local authorities in England are required to carry out a Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) User Satisfaction Survey.
28 http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/CF0A5/sr04_psa_ch6.pdf.
29 <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ho-targets-autumn-report-05?view=Binary>.

1.15 Trailblazers were established in October 2003 and Action Areas in October 2004. The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit has invested an additional £1.6 million in 2004-05 in Action Areas to tackle issues of importance to the local communities ranging from litter to drug dealing. Between 2002-03 and 2004-05 the percentage of people perceiving there to be high levels of anti-social behaviour in their area fell at a greater rate in Trailblazer and Action areas (from 25 per cent to 19 per cent) than in other areas (from 19 per cent to 16 per cent) over the same period. Recorded criminal damage also fell by a greater amount in Trailblazers (4.1 per cent) and Action Areas (4.0 per cent) compared with other areas (3.1 per cent).³⁰

There is wide variation in levels of perceived anti-social behaviour

1.16 The British Crime Survey shows that the percentage of people who think that anti-social behaviour is a big or fairly big problem in their area ranges from 29 per cent in London to seven per cent in Lincolnshire and Essex. Around half of police force areas have perception levels which are statistically significantly different from the national average. Best Value Performance Indicator data, collected by local authorities in England in 2003-04³¹ shows an even greater range from nine per cent in Wolverhampton to 69 per cent in Corby (**Figure 8**). The type of area in which people lived is the characteristic most strongly associated with having high levels of perceived anti-social behaviour; with people living in hard-pressed areas significantly more likely to perceive problems with anti-social behaviour than those living in other areas.³²

Local areas are not communicating their strategies effectively

1.17 Our focus groups in six local areas involving a total of 41 people found that the majority of participants were completely unaware of their local area's strategy for tackling anti-social behaviour and did not feel that they had been given the opportunity to influence it. Several participants stated that they had had difficulties contacting the police to make a report or were not satisfied with the response they had received when they did so. This could lead to under-reporting of anti-social behaviour as people feel deterred from making further complaints. The Home Affairs Select Committee report on Anti-Social Behaviour in 2004-05 and the review of the Crime and Disorder Act, published in 2006 both found that that Crime and Disorder Partnerships were not fully taking into account the views of local residents when developing their strategy to tackle anti-social behaviour.³³

1.18 Recent research by Ipsos-Mori for the Home Office has shown that it is in authorities' interests to communicate effectively with the local population.³⁴ Fifty four per cent of residents who felt informed about how anti-social behaviour was being tackled in their community had confidence in their local authority's ability to deal with it as opposed to only 28 per cent who did not feel informed. The Home Office is thus encouraging Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to communicate their efforts better to the public, for example, through the "face the public" sessions proposed in the Police and Justice Bill. Such sessions are intended to provide members of the local community with the opportunity to directly challenge senior representatives from the local police force and council on their response to anti-social behaviour, and in the Home Office's view provide the potential for a more responsive strategy in touch with local concerns.

"Maybe once or twice a year the police would turn up to let you know how many cars have been burgled, how many houses ... It was a waste of time. And there was nothing done about it. The council, all they were bothered about was how much people were in arrears."

Source: Female aged over 35 at NAO focus group in Wear Valley held in August 2006

30 Home Office, *Respect Action Plan*, January 2006.

31 Latest figures available: the surveys are completed every three years. Source: Best Value User Satisfaction Survey 2003-04.

32 Upson, *Perceptions and Experience of Anti-Social Behaviour*, findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey, Home Office Online Report 21/06.

33 Home Affairs Select Committee Report, *Anti-Social Behaviour*, Fifth Report of Session 2004-05.

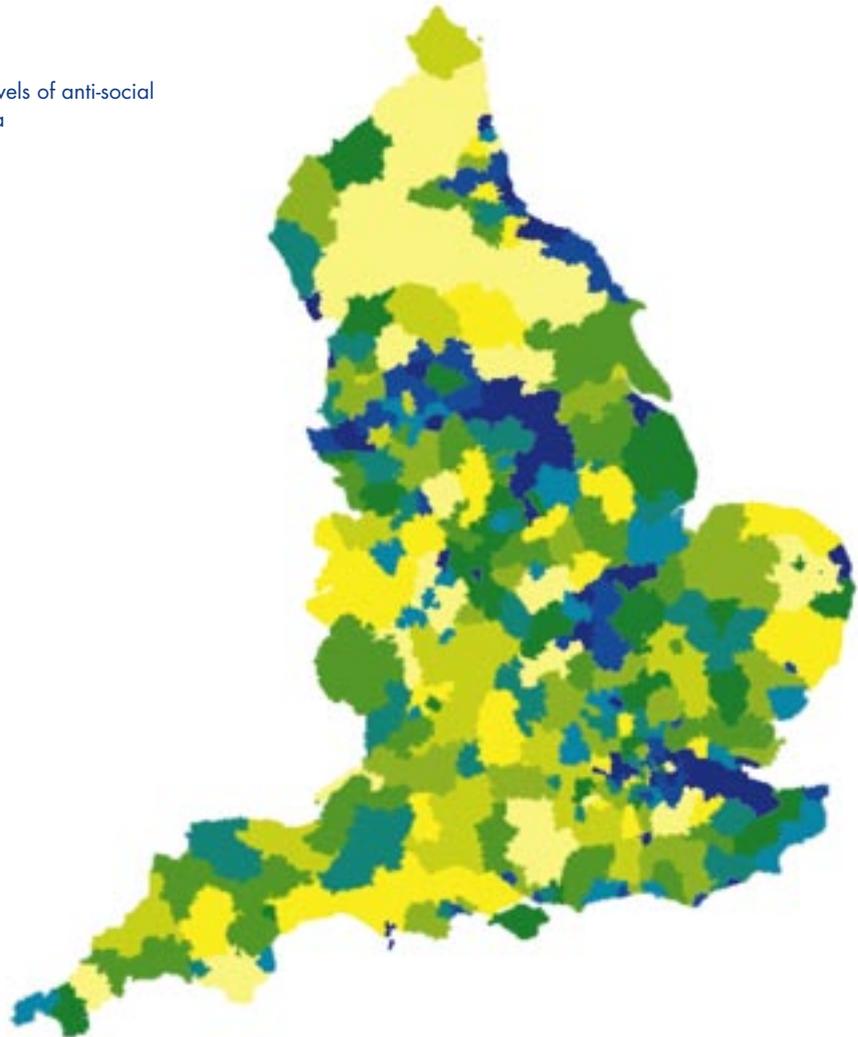
34 Ipsos-Mori, *Crime and Justice Newsletter*, 2006.

8 There is significant regional variation in perceived levels of anti-social behaviour

Map showing the proportion of the population in England who think that levels of anti-social behaviour are high or very high in their area.

The proportion of residents who think that levels of anti-social behaviour are high or very high in their area (colours represent deciles)

■	51.5	to	69.4
■	47.0	to	51.5
■	44.3	to	47.0
■	39.7	to	44.3
■	37.0	to	39.7
■	34.5	to	37.0
■	31.7	to	34.5
■	29.5	to	31.7
■	25.9	to	29.5
■	8.7	to	25.9



Source: National Audit Office analysis of Best Value Performance Indicator data 2003-04

PART TWO

For the majority of cases reviewed, anti-social behaviour interventions contributed to deterring further engagement in anti-social behaviour

2.1 The Home Office has designed most of the new powers and tools to provide immediate respite to victims of anti-social behaviour in the local community. Interventions are intended to protect the community and deter individuals from engaging in further acts of anti-social behaviour or criminality and to set an example to others in the local community who may be on the verge of behaving anti-socially. In this Part we consider whether interventions have contributed to deterring people from involvement in anti-social behaviour; how much they cost and the barriers to their use.

Local areas are making increasing use of the new interventions to tackle anti-social behaviour

2.2 Local areas have a wide range of interventions available to tackle anti-social behaviour which vary in their impact on the perpetrator and the cost. The Home Office does not have definitive figures on the extent to which different local areas are using different interventions because, with the exception of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Dispersal Orders, it does not collect data on the number of different types of interventions used. This is because a number of local agencies and government departments are responsible for developing the policy and for the issuing of these tools and powers: for example the Department for Communities and Local Government collects information on housing tools and powers. Additionally interventions such as warning letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are informal voluntary agreements which are not considered by the Home Office to be suitable for formal central collection. However, in 2003-04 and 2004-05 the Home Office ran a survey of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships which showed that local areas are making increasing use of the interventions available (**Figure 9**). 64 per cent of

Partnerships responded to the survey in 2004-05. A further survey is currently being carried out covering the period 2005-06.

2.3 The variation in use of the interventions primarily reflects the severity of the intervention and the behaviour which it is intended to address³⁵, with Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators and others typically increasing

9 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are the most frequently used intervention

Type of intervention	2003-04	2004-05	Percentage increase
Acceptable Behaviour Contracts	5,094	8,654	70
Anti-Social Behaviour Orders	2,874	4,274	49
Housing Injunctions	946	1,614	71
Parenting Contracts	307	1,296	322
Parenting Orders	229	537	134
Crack House Closure Orders	176	338	92
Individual Support Orders	5	30	500

NOTES

1 Numbers of warning letters did not form part of this survey. Figures for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Individual Support Orders were obtained from court returns. Figures for all other interventions in the table were obtained from the Home Office's survey of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (<http://www.together.gov.uk/article.asp?aid=3567&c=458>). The response rate to the survey in 2004-05 was 64 per cent and the figures for 2003-04 have been adjusted to ensure consistency between years.

2 All figures are for the years 1st October to 30th September 2003-04 and 2004-05 respectively. Crack House Closure Orders were brought in from January 2004 and Individual Support Orders from May 2004.

35 Inconsistencies in the data provided to the Home Office may also account for some of the variation.

the severity of interventions if the behaviour continued. Variations may also reflect the degree of familiarity which the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and others have with the intervention and the authority within which the anti-social behaviour team is situated (e.g. police, local authority, etc). During our visits to twelve local authority areas, we found that anti-social behaviour co-ordinators and others were more likely to use the interventions which related to their background. For example where the anti-social behaviour team was situated with the local authority they were more likely to deal with anti-social behaviour using a housing intervention, such as a housing injunction, than when the team was situated with the police. A similar difference in the use of interventions was also noted in recent research by the Youth Justice Board, which found that “this [variation in the use of different types of Anti-Social Behaviour Order] could not be explained by examining the type of behaviour which led to the intervention, but appeared rather to be due to the development of local preferences for a particular route”.³⁶

2.4 The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit is supporting and providing good practice to practitioners via the Together website and Action Line. Practitioners were generally very positive about these communication media. Ten of the twelve areas that we visited used the website regularly. Practitioners were also positive about the training and net-working sessions (also known as Together Academies) through which over ten thousand practitioners have been trained since 2004.

The majority of people in our sample who received an anti-social behaviour intervention did not re-engage in anti-social behaviour

2.5 We used data from our sample of 893 cases³⁷ to analyse the effect of warning letters, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders on those involved in anti-social behaviour. We used this analysis to determine the apparent impact of the intervention applied in each case in terms of whether there was evidence of further anti-social behaviour within the period covered by the case file, and if so, after how long and what further intervention had occurred. We assumed that when anybody received a warning letter, Acceptable Behaviour, Anti-Social Behaviour Order or other intervention, or when they breached the conditions of their Anti-Social Behaviour Order, the individual had behaved anti-socially. Conversely if they did not receive a further intervention we assumed that they had not re-engaged in further anti-social behaviour.

2.6 Using this approach we estimated the percentage of people who re-engaged in anti-social behaviour after an intervention and the median time that it took them to do so (see Figure 10). In practice it is possible that other factors unrelated to the intervention, such as changes in family circumstances for example, may have contributed partly or wholly to changes in behaviour.

10 The proportion of people who did not re-engage in anti-social behaviour following the three most common interventions ranged from 63 per cent to 45 per cent

Intervention	Proportion not engaging in further anti-social behaviour	Proportion engaging in further anti-social behaviour	Median time to further anti-social behaviour for those that engaged in it
Warning letter	63%	37%	73 days
Acceptable Behaviour Contract	65%	35%	155 days
Anti-Social Behaviour Order	45%	55% ¹	296 days

Source: National Audit Office

NOTE

¹ The data relating to warning letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts comes from our own case review, but data on breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order comes from matching our sample against the Police National Computer. There is a time lag when court records are updated on to the Police National Computer so they may be under recorded. See Appendix 1, Paragraph 1.5 for a more detailed explanation of how the proportion engaging in anti-social behaviour was calculated. In addition people can breach their Anti-Social Behaviour Order without necessarily behaving anti-socially. A breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order does not necessarily involve anti-social behaviour but involves breaking one or more of the prohibitions of the Order, for example, entering a prohibited area.

³⁶ Summary report page 8, Solanki, Bateman, Boswell and Hill, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Youth Justice Board, 2006.

³⁷ For further details on the sample and methodology please see the Methodology Appendix.

We were not therefore able to draw conclusions as to whether other forms of intervention or no intervention would have achieved the same or a better outcome. The Home Office believes that even where people did re-engage in anti-social behaviour there may well have been an improvement in the nature or frequency of this behaviour which would have brought benefits to the wider community, and acted as a deterrent to others.

2.7 The outcomes for the three interventions are not directly comparable since different interventions will be used in different circumstances. Warning letters are generally used for relatively minor acts of anti-social behaviour and are unlikely to be effective for more serious incidents. We found that whether or not an individual re-engaged in anti-social behaviour after an intervention was heavily influenced by their age. For example warning letters appeared to be more effective on those under 18 than on adults (see paragraph 2.8). The extent to which individuals received support services in conjunction with their intervention is also likely to be a factor, but we could not assess this because complete information on support services was not available on Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators' files.

Sixty three per cent of people in our sample who received a warning letter did not re-engage in anti-social behaviour

2.8 Within our sample, 63 per cent of people who received a warning letter were not reported to have received another intervention to stop anti-social behaviour. However, of those who did engage in further anti-social behaviour, this occurred quickly relative to the other interventions. Fifty per cent received a further intervention within 73 days of a warning letter. Whilst warning letters are an effective deterrent for the majority, there are some who pay them little heed. We found that warning letters are much more effective with younger people than adults, with 38 per cent of those under 18 receiving a further intervention after a warning letter compared to 58 per cent of adults.³⁸

65 per cent of those in our sample who received an Acceptable Behaviour Contract did not re-engage in anti-social behaviour

2.9 Within our sample 65 per cent of those who received an Acceptable Behaviour Contract were not reported to have received another intervention to stop anti-social behaviour. Thirty five per cent of those who received Acceptable Behaviour Contracts re-engaged in anti-social behaviour in comparison to 55 per cent of those who received Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are however more likely to be given to people displaying less serious behaviour than those given Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.

2.10 The proportion of young people re-engaging in anti-social behaviour following an Acceptable Behaviour Contracts is considerably higher than for other groups. Sixty one per cent of people aged under-18 displayed anti-social behaviour again in comparison with 27 per cent of those over 18. Our interviews with ten young people who had received Acceptable Behaviour Contracts showed that some had not engaged in the process of setting the conditions and had agreed conditions which it was very difficult for them to achieve. For example peer pressure can be an influence on young people behaving anti-socially and they are often asked not to see particular friends as part of the conditions of their Contract. In practical terms this condition can be difficult to achieve if the friends live close by unless the young person is taught how to distance themselves appropriately. Those agreeing Acceptable Behaviour Contracts with young people need to engage with these individuals and, where appropriate, provide them with support to give them a good chance of meeting their conditions. The Youth Justice Board has recently expressed similar concerns over the conditions attached to Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, and the extent to which they are sufficiently targeted and realise the importance for young people of association with friends and access to public space.³⁹

When they [the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators] agree an Acceptable Behaviour Contract with the kids they do not have a conversation with them about how they are going to achieve it. In a sense they are setting them up to fail.

Source: Semi-structured interview with youth support worker

³⁸ 24 per cent per cent of the cases we examined involving warning letter (199 cases) did not have the age recorded on file. Of these 24 per cent of people re-engaged in anti-social behaviour after they received the warning letter.

³⁹ Solanki, Bateman, Boswell and Hill, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Youth Justice Board, 2006.

2.11 People who receive Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are likely to repeat anti-social behaviour again more quickly than those who receive Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. This may be because in the areas we visited Acceptable Behaviour Contracts normally run for six months although they can run for longer whilst Anti-Social Behaviour Orders run for a minimum of two years. There may be potential to reduce anti-social behaviour by extending the length of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts or by putting support in place as contracts come to an end. As Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are non-statutory, voluntary agreements, co-ordinators have the flexibility to adapt them in this way. For example, in Hackney those completing the terms of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract successfully are visited and presented with a certificate congratulating them on finishing the contract. Practitioners also take the opportunity to assess the needs of the individual and offer further support if necessary. This approach appears to have a positive effect, as the proportion engaging in further anti-social behaviour following an Acceptable Behaviour Contracts in Hackney stands at 17 per cent compared to 35 per cent across the whole sample.⁴⁰

Twenty three per cent of our sample received an Anti-Social Behaviour Order and just over half breached their Order

2.12 Twenty three per cent of our sample (211 people) received an Anti-Social Behaviour Order⁴¹ of which 40 per cent had an earlier anti-social behaviour intervention recorded on their file and 80 per cent had received at least one previous criminal conviction (see paragraph 2.12). As with anti-social behaviour interventions in general, young men were more likely than anyone else to receive an Anti-Social Behaviour Order. Thirty eight per cent of the people

who received an Order were under 18 and 85 per cent were male. Fifty five per cent of our sample of recipients of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (115 people) breached their Order. However, some of these breaches could have related to breaking one or more of the conditions of the Order, for example entering a prohibited area, rather than committing further anti-social behaviour. Forty four per cent of those that breached their Order only did so on one or two occasions, 35 per cent did on five or more occasions, to a maximum of 25. The average number of breaches amongst the 115 people in our sample that breached their Order was four.

People in our sample with criminal convictions were more likely than those without to re-engage in anti-social behaviour after an intervention

2.13 Those with criminal convictions were more likely to re-engage in anti-social behaviour following an intervention than other groups. They were also likely to do so sooner. For example, 60 per cent of those who received a criminal conviction before an anti-social behaviour intervention in our sample re-engaged in anti-social behaviour in comparison to 41 per cent of those who had not. The relationship between criminal behaviour and anti-social behaviour is complex. Thirty seven per cent of all perpetrators of anti-social behaviour in our sample had a criminal conviction, with an average of 24 convictions each. Eighty per cent of them received at least one criminal conviction before their first anti-social behaviour intervention. The number of criminal convictions varies significantly depending on the type of anti-social behaviour intervention received (see Figure 11). Those that received a warning letter and have a criminal history have an average of 15 criminal convictions, in comparison to an average of

11 The severity of anti-social behaviour interventions rises in line with the number of previous criminal convictions

Intervention	Percentage matched on Police National Computer	Percentage of people with previous conviction(s) before intervention	Average number of convictions for those with convictions
Warning letter	25%	20%	15
Acceptable Behaviour Contract	38%	34%	17
Anti-Social Behaviour Order (stand alone) ¹	86%	79%	26
Anti-Social Behaviour Order on Conviction	92%	92% ²	62

Source: National Audit Office

NOTES

1 "Stand alone" Anti-Social Behaviour Orders includes both interim and full Orders.

2 De facto must be 100 per cent, however only 92 per cent was matched to the Police National Computer.

40 The percentage across the whole sample includes the results for all six areas of which Hackney was one.

41 This includes full Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Interim Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders on Conviction.

17 convictions for those receiving an Acceptable Behaviour Contract. Those with criminal histories that received an Anti-Social Behaviour Order have an average of 31 criminal convictions although this varies significantly depending on whether the Order was stand alone or issued on conviction of another criminal offence.

Local areas do not have sufficient evidence on the effectiveness of interventions

2.14 The Home Office encourages Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to use the interventions which they consider the most effective in relation to the issues facing

their community. Our case review showed that different areas favour the use of different interventions to tackle anti-social behaviour. **Figure 12** shows that Hackney, for example use a far higher proportion of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts than other areas.

2.15 With the exception of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Dispersal Orders, the Home Office does not collect complete data on the extent to which local areas are using the full range of new interventions to tackle anti-social behaviour due to the range of agencies involved and informal nature of some of the interventions.⁴² Nor does it carry out any regular or large scale evaluations of the effect of the interventions on the behaviour of those involved with anti-social behaviour. It does, however, collect ad hoc

12 The use of different types of interventions varies across areas

Percentage use of each type of intervention as per the case review with contextual information

	Easington	Exeter	Hackney	Liverpool	Manchester	Wear Valley
Deprivation Index ¹	42	22	45	50	49	33
Deprivation Rank	8	115	5	1	2	32
Proportion perceiving high levels of anti-social behaviour ²	61%	38%	60%	52%	46%	36%
Urban/Rural	Mid - Rural	Small Urban	Major Urban	Major Urban	Major Urban	Small Rural
Warning Letter	58	71	21	52	35	56
Acceptable Behaviour Contract	6	13	42	12	0 ³	14
Other early intervention	7	7	22	3	22	26
Anti-Social Behaviour Order	25	4	4	31	29	4
Other	4	5	11	2	14	0
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases examined	168	170	155	167	144	89
Size of case list provided by Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator	1,920	294	244	167	1,921	89

Source: National Audit Office

NOTES

1 Deprivation Index is calculated on the basis of: income deprivation; employment deprivation; health deprivation and disability; education, skills and training deprivation; barriers to housing and services; crime; and living environment deprivation.
Source: <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>.

2 Source: Best Value Performance Indicator Data.

3 Manchester do not use Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, but use an Anti-Social Behaviour Warning Interview instead. In our case review this was classed with other warning interviews as "other early intervention".

⁴² Data is collected through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Survey, which areas can choose to respond to, and on Dispersal Orders through the Annual Data Return. Warning letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are considered to be informal interventions not suitable for formal central collection. The Department for Communities and Local Government collects data on housing tools and powers.

data on the effectiveness of interventions from local areas and provides feedback on what it perceives to be good practice through the Together academies and website. In the absence of much data on levels of use or the effectiveness of different interventions we found that the decision on which interventions to use was often influenced by the beliefs of the agencies involved about the relative merits of support action in comparison to enforcement action, balanced against consideration of what would work locally.

2.16 We spoke to 20 people who had received interventions. Of those half were under 18 and half were adults. We also spoke to the parents of some of the young people. We found a wide range of views on the extent to which these people viewed the effectiveness of the interventions that they received. Some recognised that the intervention had provided them with an opportunity to assess and modify their behaviour but others viewed the intervention as pointless and ineffective. Where the intervention had prompted a positive change in the person's behaviour it had usually taken place in conjunction with other support services or with some external factor, like a change in family situation, which motivated the individual to change.

"I was angry at the time as the ASBO meant I couldn't go round my own town, but looking back it's the best thing that could have happened as it led to me being arrested and so getting treatment in prison. I only heard about rehab when I was in prison – I just woke up one morning and wanted something different. Now I've lost the nerve to steal – I can't even nick a sandwich when I'm hungry."

Source: Male recipient of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, Brighton, November 2006

"I was devastated when he got an Acceptable Behaviour Contract – he was getting in with the wrong crowd. But I was dead proud at the passing out parade for the fire course he did. I have a support worker from the council too – she's more like a friend now."

Source: Parent of young person in Hartlepool, October 2006

There is significant variation in the cost of the different interventions

2.17 Although the Home Office has undertaken research which found that the average cost of obtaining an Anti-Social Behaviour Order was approximately £2,500⁴³ there was little or no information on the cost of other interventions, so we estimated the respective costs based on seminars held in local areas with a range of relevant agencies.⁴⁴ This data is based on the staff time and legal costs but does not take into account wider costs such as providing the support that may go alongside an intervention, monitoring the intervention to gauge effectiveness, or policing the intervention to ensure that conditions are not breached. **Figure 13 overleaf** sets out the average cost of obtaining six different interventions.

2.18 Costs increase in step with the staircase of interventions. The cost of an intervention tends to be influenced by the time taken to obtain the intervention, the number of agencies involved in the process and whether or not legal support is required. For example, our analysis showed that an Anti-Social Behaviour Order is a considerably more expensive intervention at an average cost of £3,100 than an Acceptable Behaviour Contract at £230. This is primarily because an Anti-Social Behaviour Order has to be imposed in court by a magistrate and consequently police, prosecutors' and lawyers' time is required to prepare and present the case whereas an Acceptable Behaviour Contract is a non-statutory voluntary agreement and so can be agreed between the individual and agency concerned, without the need for any legal processes. Effective use of early interventions to stop anti-social behaviour can save the costs of later, more expensive interventions.

⁴³ Costs of Anti-Social Behaviour: A Summary Report, Lemetti and Parkinson, 2005, Home Office.

⁴⁴ We undertook "Costing Seminars" in twelve local areas. We invited along all agencies involved in delivering the range of interventions we were examining. In the first part of the session we mapped out the process for delivering each intervention and in the second half we asked individuals to estimate the time input by them or their agency to deliver the intervention. Cost estimates were then calculated based on hourly rates for the various agencies involved. For full details please see the Methodology appendix.

13 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders are the most expensive intervention, but are used on the most challenging individuals

The cost of obtaining seven of the most commonly used interventions and groups on which they are used

Intervention	Average cost	Average number of convictions for those with previous convictions	Proportion with previous convictions
Warning letter	£66	15	20%
Penalty Notice	£74	n/a	n/a
Acceptable Behaviour Contract	£230	17	34%
Injunction	£1,600	n/a	n/a
Anti-Social Behaviour Order (Stand Alone)	£3,100	26	79%
Prosecution for breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order	£1,500	34	94%

Source: National Audit Office

NOTE

Based on seminars in 12 local areas involving practitioners from a range of agencies including the police and local authorities. The cost does not include the cost of other support services which may be provided in conjunction with the intervention e.g. youth projects or drug rehabilitation schemes, nor does it include the cost of policing the intervention. Court costs are included but legal aid costs are not. The number of hearings required for the legal interventions will have a significant impact on the cost of the intervention. Stand alone Anti-Social Behaviour Orders include interim and full Orders and are likely to be more costly than Orders on Conviction which are secured at the same time as the hearing for a criminal offence.

Spending on interventions can result in savings elsewhere

2.19 As set out in Part 1 anti-social behaviour costs society several billion pounds per year and effective intervention can help avoid these costs. To the extent that people desist from anti-social behaviour after an intervention there should be benefits to society. For example, 33 per cent of the people in our sample who received only one intervention were involved in nuisance behaviour at an approximate total cost to the authorities of £185 per incident⁴⁵. The majority of these received a warning letter at a cost of £66 and did not re-engage in any further anti-social behaviour. Agencies are not deterred by the costs of the interventions they use, with two thirds of respondents to a Home Office survey considering that using Anti-Social Behaviour Orders would result in savings elsewhere.⁴⁶

Delays in the legal process and a lack of support for victims hampers the success of interventions in some cases and areas

2.20 Four of the twelve areas that we visited considered that there was a lack of capacity and experience of using anti-social behaviour legislation within their local authorities' legal services departments which sometimes resulted in breaches of interventions not being dealt with in a timely manner or not at all. Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators told us that a lack of timely action when the conditions of an intervention were breached frustrated the local community.

⁴⁵ Home Office, *One day count of anti-social behaviour*, 2003.

⁴⁶ Costs of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders – a summary report, Lemetti and Parkinson, 2005.

2.21 Several of the local areas that we visited also reported frustration at what they perceived to be lenient sentencing by magistrates when people breached the conditions of their Anti-Social Behaviour Order. They believed this sometimes occurred because the Crown Prosecution Service gave little information about the history of the case to the court and that consequently Magistrates failed to appreciate the seriousness of the breach. In some cases this may have been because the relevant agencies did not provide sufficient background information with the breach file to the Crown Prosecution Service. From our sample 55 per cent of those who received an Anti-Social Behaviour Order breached the Order and the majority received a community penalty. The number of times that these people breached ranged from one to 25. Forty one per cent of these breaches were dealt with by committal to custody although in some cases the sentence is likely to have been influenced by other concurrent criminal convictions.

2.22 Another factor which can lead to delays or a breakdown in the legal process of obtaining and dealing with breaches of interventions is witnesses' fear of reprisals.⁴⁷ An investigation into the experiences of victims and witnesses published in July 2004 found fear is the greatest deterrent to victims becoming involved in reporting incidents and acting as witnesses.⁴⁸ It also found that one of the main reasons for witnesses' unhappiness was poor communication and a lack of information about case progress. The report concluded that dedicated witness support schemes have a valuable role in helping witnesses overcome their fears of attending court. The Home Office has responded to some of the fears of victims and witnesses by allowing written instead of verbal evidence to be submitted in court in relation to applications for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and

Injunctions. Further special measures introduced in the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 include screening witnesses from the defendants, giving evidence through video link or in private, and the use of video recorded evidence. This makes it easier for witnesses to give evidence in the Crown and Magistrates' court during an Anti-Social Behaviour Order hearing. However, if an Order is breached, then witnesses have to give oral evidence at the hearing which they can find intimidating.

2.23 The anti-social behaviour practitioners we met during our visits provided a range of support to victims and witnesses ranging from standard victim support through to wide-ranging additional support and protection in other areas. In some cases there were mechanisms for victims to have additional security measures installed in their houses, and co-ordinators sometimes spent significant time with the witness to prepare them for, and support them through the legal process. However, there is no single organisation responsible for providing support to victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour. Therefore the response to victims of anti-social behaviour can be patchy. Participants at our focus groups reported that they felt strongly deterred from making reports of anti-social behaviour because of fear of reprisals and intimidation.

"The other worry though if you do get involved and you don't know who finds out you're involved then you could be intimidated by them ... If you've got a council estate and somebody on that street's there carrying out that thing they'd be getting their windows broken, they'd be burnt out."

Source: Female, aged over 35, at NAO focus group in Manchester, September 2006

⁴⁷ As Anti-Social Behaviour Orders are civil orders the use of hearsay and professional witness evidence is permitted. Hearsay evidence enables a police officer to provide a statement on behalf of a witness or witnesses who remain anonymous. Professional witness evidence allows those in an Anti-Social Behaviour Order case in a professional capacity, such as council officers, to give evidence on behalf of the witness or witnesses. Both these measures ensure the complainant's identity is withheld from the defendant.

⁴⁸ Hunter et al, What works for victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour, Sheffield Hallam University, July 2004.

PART THREE

More use of prevention to tackle anti-social behaviour is likely to be cost effective

3.1 In this Part we consider what causes people to engage in anti-social behaviour and the outcome of research into preventive actions.

Many complex factors lie behind people's involvement in anti-social behaviour

3.2 There is no definitive answer as to why people perpetrate anti-social behaviour but there are many factors which are likely to contribute including early involvement in the use of illegal drugs, mental health problems, family conflict or a history of non-attendance at school.⁴⁹ Four main areas of risk have been identified as potential factors in causing anti-social behaviour. These are personal and individual factors; schooling and educational attainment; community life, accommodation and employment; and the family environment.⁵⁰ Furthermore, evidence suggests that a majority of those who are 'perpetrators' of anti-social behaviour are also reported to be 'victims' of anti-social behaviour.⁵¹ A preventive strategy will therefore need to work across a whole range of complex social, personal and familial issues to tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour. Participants at our focus groups believed that anti-social behaviour was caused by a lack of activities for young people; poverty; poor housing; poor parenting; an increase in use of drugs and alcohol; and a decline in mutual respect.

"...My missus made me want to change. She told me I had to clean up my act or [else]. I can't read or write but I'm learning at the hostel. I have lessons once a week and a couple of the guys help me for one hour a day. This time next year I want to be in college – I want to better myself. I just want to be able to write my kids cards at Christmas. That would make me really happy."

Source: Interview with resident at St. Mungo's hostel in south London, September 2006

3.3 A range of Government initiatives are intended directly or indirectly to contribute to a reduction in the risk of people becoming involved in anti-social behaviour. These include the Sure Start programme and work underway in relation to neighbourhood renewal; reducing poverty; employment measures; improvements to housing; education; and investment in drug treatment. Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators saw diversionary activities as particularly helpful in preventing engagement in anti-social behaviour; along with the use of less formal interventions, such as parenting classes, referral to a relevant charity or provision of support services.

49 Farrington, D. and Coid, J.W. eds. (2003) *Early Prevention of Adult Anti-Social Behaviour*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK; Home Office, Research Development & Statistics, ASB - A collection of published evidence, 2004.

50 Home Office, Research Development & Statistics, ASB - A collection of published evidence, 2004.

51 In six out of ten families (60 per cent) family members were reported to be both 'victims' and 'perpetrators' – Department for Communities and Local Government, Housing Research Summary Number 230, 2006. This confirms with what we were told by Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators in our own research.

There is variation in the extent to which supportive interventions are used in conjunction with enforcement

3.4 The Home Office introduced Individual Support Orders in an attempt to address the causes which may be behind a young person's anti-social behaviour. These orders are not preventive as the young person will have already engaged in serious or persistent anti-social behaviour, but they may help support the young person in desisting from further anti-social behaviour. An Individual Support Order can be given to an under 18 year old for up to six months and can accompany a full Anti-Social Behaviour Order which is not issued on conviction. The Order can require a young person to attend up to two sessions a week providing targeted support relevant to that person's needs. Individual Support Orders are appropriate where the young person has refused support which has been offered. Parenting Orders and Contracts are interventions intended to support parents and teach them parenting skills through attendance at parenting programmes.

3.5 Individual Support Orders were introduced in May 2004 and during 2004-05 just over one per cent of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders had an Individual Support Order attached. Recent research by the Youth Justice Board found a majority of sentencers to be unaware of Individual Support Orders⁵² and practitioners we spoke to raised issues about a lack of awareness and confusion surrounding the use of the order. The Home Office is concerned at the low levels of use of this Order and has recently started working with the Youth Justice Board and HM Courts Service to raise awareness and tackle any misconceptions about its use. Parenting Orders and Contracts have been used much more widely than Individual Support Orders (see Figure 9) and were felt by practitioners to be effective.

Further support is required to ensure that mental health and social services are fully engaged with anti-social behaviour teams

3.6 During our visits to twelve local areas several practitioners told us that they would have liked to facilitate the provision of further support services for perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, particularly in relation to mental health and social services. However,

they were unable to because social services and mental health teams frequently struggle to balance anti-social behaviour cases with the many serious cases they face. Furthermore, perpetrators at times refused support and Co-ordinators were unable to compel them to take it up. During our twelve seminars held in local areas to map out the processes involved in delivering anti-social behaviour interventions the lack of engagement of social services was highlighted as a difficulty which could cause bottlenecks in the processes.

3.7 The government is seeking to address these issues through the Respect Action Plan. The Plan recognises that the necessary involvement of many different agencies in tackling anti-social behaviour on the ground can result in a lack of leadership, co-ordination and responsibility. In particular it notes that there is a need to address gaps in services and improve responsiveness – particularly in terms of parenting provision, mental health and drug treatment services. Work to address this is being taken forward as part of the Social Exclusion Action Plan to be published in summer 2007. In the shorter-term, 50 Family Intervention Projects, working with the most challenging and anti-social families, are being established across the country. A core feature of the Family Intervention Projects is their ability to customise their services to the needs of families, and this approach will be an important element in understanding how best to tackle gaps in services.

Preventive programmes are cost effective

3.8 We commissioned a literature review on the effectiveness, costs and benefits of interventions used across Europe and the United States to reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. The review suggested that it is good value for money to invest in preventive measures.⁵³ The literature demonstrates that interventions are most successful when more than one form of intervention or support takes place concurrently and when they focus on the risk factors that increase the likelihood of offending behaviour, such as family involvement in crime.⁵⁴ **Figure 14 overleaf** shows examples of fully evaluated programmes of intervention in Europe and the United States which have been deemed by the researchers to be effective.

⁵² Solanki, Bateman, Boswell and Hill, *Anti-Social Behaviour Orders*, Youth Justice Board, 2006

⁵³ *Interventions to reduce anti-social behaviour and crime*, Rubin et al, RAND Europe for the National Audit Office, September 2006.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

14 Examples of cost effective preventive interventions from Europe and the United States

Type of intervention	Example of evaluated project	Outcomes from project
Early childhood intervention	Under the Syracuse Study 108 deprived families received home visits and day care from the third trimester of pregnancy until age five. ¹	Ten years after the intervention ended six per cent of the target group had been referred to probation in comparison with 22 per cent of a control group.
Education	The Job Corps programme in the United States provides a range of services including education, vocational training, counselling, healthcare, recreation and job placements. The programme takes place on residential campuses and lasts a year. ²	Participants in Job Corps were less likely to have been arrested, convicted or imprisoned than the control group.
Graduation incentives	An Educational Maintenance Allowance of between £10 to £30 is given to 16–18 year olds in areas of low participation and high levels of deprivation in the UK. ³	The aim of the programme was to increase participation and retention in education but it was also found to have a positive effect on juvenile crime. Male convictions for burglary and theft offences fell more in the 15 Local Education Authorities that piloted the scheme than in the rest of the Authorities in England.
Developmental interventions	An American meta-analysis of 200 studies showed that the most effective intervention for non-institutionalised juvenile offenders were counselling, interpersonal skills training and behavioural programmes. ⁴	The programmes reduced recidivism by about 40 per cent. The programmes were more effective on those who had committed a greater number of prior serious offences.
Family based interventions	A meta-analysis of eight randomised control trials of parenting and daily interventions in the USA, Canada and Norway. ⁵	The interventions can result in a reduction in the risk of juvenile delinquents being re-arrested one to three years after completion of the programme.
Restorative justice	The Halt Scheme in the Netherlands offers young people who have committed acts of vandalism the possibility of working or paying as a means of rectifying their offence. ⁶	After the scheme over 60 per cent of the young people reduced or stopped this behaviour in comparison with a control group where 25 per cent reduced and none stopped the behaviour.

Source: Rand literature review commissioned by the National Audit Office

NOTES

1 Greenwood, P., Model, K., Rydell, P. C., and Chiesa, J. (1998) *Diverting Children from a Life of Crime: Measuring Costs and Benefits*, RAND Monograph Report, MR-699-1-UCB/RC/IF, Santa Monica, USA.

2 Karoly, L. A. (2003) *Caring for our Children and Youth: An analysis of alternative investment strategies*, RAND Corporation Working Paper, Santa Monica, CA, USA.

3 Feinstein, L. and Sabates, R. (2005) *Education and Youth Crime: Effects of Introducing the Education Maintenance Allowance Programme*, Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, Institute of Education.

4 Lipsey, M. and Wilson, D. (1998) *Effective Intervention for Serious Juvenile Offenders*, in Loeber, R. and Farrington, D. (eds) *Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders: Risk Factors and Successful Interventions*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, USA.

5 Woolfenden, S. R., Williams, K., Peat, J. K. (2002) *Family and Parenting Interventions for Conduct Disorder and Delinquency: A Meta-Analysis of Randomised Controlled Trials*, Arch Dis Child 86.

6 Coester, M., Gossner, U., Rossner, D., Bannenberg, B., and Fasholz, S. (2002). *Kriminalologische Analyse empirisch untersuchter Präventionsmodelle aus aller Welt: 61 Studien im Überblick* in Düsseldorf Gutachten: Empirisch gesicherte Erkenntnisse über kriminalpräventive Wirkungen, City of Düsseldorf.

3.9 Sixty per cent of people who received an Anti-Social Behaviour Order had no earlier anti-social behaviour intervention recorded on their file although 80 per cent had received previous criminal convictions. However, many of the files did not contain information on supportive interventions which may have taken place through agencies such as social services. People who receive Anti-Social Behaviour Orders often have complex problems which are costly to solve. The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit recently estimated that problem families, whose members commit crime, live on benefits and have poor health, cost the state up to £250,000 a year each.⁵⁵ Research from the United States estimates that overall savings by diverting an individual from a life of anti-social behaviour and crime range from 1.7 to 2.3 million dollars (approximately £0.9 to £1.2 million).⁵⁶ Earlier interventions to help young people escape from this cycle could help to avoid these costs. Analysis of seven interventions on populations aged between 18 and 44 based in community settings in the United States showed that the cost benefit ratio of the interventions ranged between a ratio of 1:1.13 to 1:7.14. Cost benefit analysis of twenty early childhood intervention programmes showed even greater benefits ranging from a cost: benefit ratio of 1:1.26 to 1:17.07.⁵⁷ Long term analysis has found that benefits can persist up to age 40.⁵⁸

3.10 The Home Office is now applying greater emphasis to the need to encourage the use of supportive or preventive measures. The Government's Respect Action Plan, published in January 2006, aims to move the strategy on anti-social behaviour forwards, by spreading the drive "broader, deeper and further"⁵⁹ in its aim to build respect and reduce anti-social behaviour. Furthermore in November 2006 the Government announced that it was considering new legislation to address anti-social behaviour and take forward the Respect Action Plan. This report does not cover the Respect Action Plan but supports this move towards placing more emphasis on addressing the causes of anti-social behaviour.

55 Monks, B. *Southampton Study*, 2005.

56 Scott, S. Knapp, M. Henderson, J. Maughan, B. (2001) Financial costs of social exclusion: follow up study of anti-social children into adulthood, *British Medical Journal* 323:191-194.

57 These intervention programmes operated primarily in the United States, but some also operated in the United Kingdom and internationally. Karoly, L., Kilburn, R. and Cannon, J. (2005) *Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise*, RAND Corporation MG-341-PNC, Santa Monica, CA, USA.

58 This was the case for the Perry Preschool Project carried out in the United States. Karoly, L., Kilburn, R. and Cannon, J. (2005) *Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise*, RAND Corporation MG-341-PNC, Santa Monica, CA, USA.

59 Home Office, *Respect Action Plan*, 2006.

APPENDIX ONE

Methodology

Introduction

- 1** To assess the value for money of the Home Office's anti-social behaviour strategy we:
 - a** Modelled the cost and apparent impact of three different interventions with the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour and the costs of a further three interventions.
 - b** Assessed whether local strategies fulfil the Home Office's objective of working with local communities to reduce and prevent anti-social behaviour.
- 2** Fieldwork consisted of:
 - a** Visits to local areas, organised through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships/Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators.
 - b** A review of the Home Office's Together campaign.
 - c** A review of third party research on the effectiveness, costs and benefits of interventions to tackle anti-social behaviour.
 - d** Structured interviews with perpetrators (and some parents).

Local Visits

- 3** **Modelling of the cost of interventions:**
 - a** We gathered data to enable us to estimate the costs of three specific interventions through seminars at 12 locations. Representatives of all agencies involved in the interventions including the police, council and Youth Offending Teams were invited to map out the tasks involved and how long each task takes.
 - b** Costs were determined as the hours taken multiplied by hourly pay rates of staff involved in intervention, overheads and legal costs.

- c** The cost seminar process allowed us to develop a network analysis of all individuals involved in the interventions at a local level, and also enabled us to identify problems and inefficiencies within the system.
- 4** **Case Review:**
 - a** We visited six local areas in order to gather information on the apparent impact of different types of intervention in dealing with anti-social behaviour. This information was ordered through a coding framework which was devised by the study team and can be viewed on request. Information was obtained through case review of two random samples at each location:
 - the first sample was drawn from individuals who received an initial warning letter (or otherwise the first step on the spectrum of intervention used in the locality). This sample was obtained randomly from the case file list provided to us by the area;
 - the second sample was drawn from individuals who have been given an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, convicted for breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order or have been evicted. Again, this sample was selected randomly from the case file list provided to us by the area; and
 - where either of the samples was not large enough to generate sufficient files we took random samples of the files which were available, ensuring that there was the best spread across the spectrum of intervention possible, for example examining Acceptable Behaviour Contract files, or housing files.

- b** The target sample size was approximately 158 in each area, which would have given us a total sample of 950. However, some areas had a lower than expected case-load, which meant that it was not possible to take a full sample of 158. We therefore had a final sample of 893. We did not extrapolate to the national population on the basis of this sample.
- c** The majority of the cases we reviewed were held by the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator or Team. However, dependent on the local structure, we also reviewed cases held by the Police, Council Housing Department, or Registered Social Landlords as appropriate.
- d** The case management systems in different areas varied significantly for a range of reasons including the fact that some areas held more historic information; some areas had information on actions taken by other agencies; and some areas only kept information on more serious cases. It was not therefore always possible to obtain a full case list, nor to calculate what proportion of the total case list was included within our sample.
- e** We examined the files in each area as per **Figure 15**.
- f** As far as was possible from the cases we were provided with we collected the following data on each individual:
 - demographic data;
 - number and types of intervention applied to the individual; and
 - the apparent impact of each intervention, in terms of whether or not an individual went on to receive subsequent interventions. It was not possible to carry out time series analysis looking at incidents of anti-social behaviour before and after an intervention because complete data was not available on file.
- g** This approach enabled us to capture a full range of interventions and to look at ‘problem’ individuals for whom early intervention has not been effective.
- h** It should be noted that the level of the detail of the cases we examined varied significantly, with some areas collecting more information than others on the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. It was also generally the case that there was more information held in files where cases had progressed to legal hearings than files where the individual had only received an early intervention and then not progressed to any further anti-social behaviour. Our analysis was therefore limited to the data contained in the files we examined.
- i** We attempted to collect data on the ethnicity of those receiving interventions in the areas visited. We were able to identify the ethnicity of approximately half of our sample (426), either from the file or from cross-referencing with data from the Police National Computer. However we considered that this data was not sufficiently robust to use in the report. We were able to collect more ethnicity data from some areas than others and the Police National Computer evidence would have skewed the data towards the more serious end of the sample as it is a database of criminal convictions.
- j** We also tried to collect evidence on any background problems that individuals receiving interventions may demonstrate. Between one and four per cent of the sample demonstrated each of the problem behaviours identified, but we could not identify any significant differential effect on the success of interventions as a result of these behaviours as the numbers were too small. Furthermore as some files were more detailed than others it was not possible to know whether no mention of background problems meant such problems did not exist.

15 The number of case files examined in each area

Area	Total files examined	Size of case list provided by Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator
Easington	168	1,920
Exeter	170	294
Hackney	155	244
Liverpool	167	167
Manchester	144	1,921
Wear Valley	89	89
Total	893	4,635

Source: National Audit Office

5 Analysis of case file review:

a Basic analysis:

- The dataset was transferred to SPSS for analysis. All tables and analysis have been calculated there. New variables have been created such that there is a variable for each intervention separately, regardless of the intervention period in which it was received.

b Testing for associations in cross-tabulations:

- Cross-tabulation associations (for example, is there a relationship between age and the likelihood of re-engaging in anti-social behaviour following an intervention) have been tested using a chi-squared test for association. All significant associations have been reported and examined further.

c Testing for differences in means:

- Where we wanted to examine a difference in average values for two particular groups (for example, is there a difference between the number of previous convictions and whether an individual re-engages in anti-social behaviour following the intervention) we have used an independent t-test which looks at the difference between two means (average).

d Examining the proportion re-engaging in anti-social behaviour for each intervention:

- the analysis of the proportion engaging in further anti-social behaviour uses event history analysis. Event history analysis is a method of estimating time-to-event models in the presence of censored data (i.e. data which have not ended by a specific time point, or have been lost for other reasons) and can give, at any time point, the probability that an intervention will be followed up by a further intervention by that time. This has been used for each intervention individually, to look at time from receipt of intervention to the receipt of the next intervention (for further anti-social behaviour), and also for time from first conviction to the next anti-social behaviour intervention dealing with further anti-social behaviour. In addition we have looked at further anti-social behaviour following warning letters based on age this way; and

- we reviewed 893 case files from six local areas. The case files showed that these people received at least one of the following interventions as per **Figure 16**.

In relation to Warning Letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts we calculated the proportion who had re-engaged in anti-social behaviour by looking to see whether the person in question had gone on to receive a further intervention as per their case file.

In relation to Anti-Social Behaviour Orders alone we looked on the Police National Computer to see whether those who received an Anti-Social Behaviour Order were recorded as having breached it on the Police National Computer. However, we also wanted to find out about the criminal history of the whole of our sample so we attempted to match the whole 893 cases against the Police National Computer. We had enough information in relation to 606 of the people whose case files we reviewed to substantiate whether or not they had a match on the Police National Computer. Of these 333 appeared on the Police National Computer and 272 did not. In relation to the remaining 288 people we did not have enough information to verify whether or not they appeared on the Police National Computer (i.e. the files were missing information on gender or date of birth).

16 Number of interventions received as per the case file review

Intervention	Number of people who received at least one of these interventions	Total number of these interventions received by the sample as per the files
Warning letters	485	619
Acceptable Behaviour Contracts	217	220
Anti-Social Behaviour Orders	211	211
Other interventions (not included in the analysis within the report)	207	279
Total	1,120	1,329

Source: National Audit Office

NOTES

The total of the number of interventions is more than the total number of cases because some people received more than one intervention. The files do not show breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders which are included in the analysis in Figure 4.

Of the people who received Anti-Social Behaviour Orders according to our file review 179 (85 per cent) also appeared on the Police National Computer. 115 of these people had at least one recorded breach of their Order recorded on the Police National Computer. The breach rate is therefore 115 (number of people who breached from the Police National Computer) over 211 (the number of people who received Anti-Social Behaviour Orders from the file review) = 55 per cent. However, some of these breaches are likely to have related to breaking one or more of the conditions of the Order, for example entering a prohibited area, rather than committing further anti-social behaviour.

The 45 per cent of people who we do not believe breached their Anti-Social Behaviour Order is made up of 28 people who got an Anti-Social Behaviour Order but do not appear at all on the Police National Computer and a further 64 people who appear on the Police National Computer but are not recorded as having breached their Anti-Social Behaviour Order.

6 Structured interviews with Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinators

- a** We interviewed the local co-ordinator at each of the 12 local areas to identify:
- key barriers and enablers in using the different interventions to inform what we are looking for in our case file review;
 - how local needs are prioritised; and
 - their experiences of using Home Office and other funding streams.

7 Structured interviews with Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators in neighbouring areas

- a** We interviewed the Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator in an area bordering each of the 12 areas we visited to investigate any cross-boundary issues related to anti-social behaviour. These interviews identified:
- The extent to which regional or cross-area structures are in place to discuss cross-boundary issues as necessary;
 - The extent to which anti-social behaviour and interventions to tackle it migrate across local authority/ Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Boundaries; and
 - Whether the anti-social behaviour strategy of one area impacts on the areas which border it.

- b** The neighbouring areas were selected on the basis of:
- there being specific cross-border issues highlighted in our main tranche of fieldwork;
 - being located in a different police force area, or county council, or being under a different local governance structure;
 - having a lower level of perceived anti-social behaviour than the area we previously visited such that any anti-social behaviour in the main fieldwork area could be expected to migrate to the secondary area; and
 - there being a disparity between perceptions of anti-social behaviour and incidents of criminal damage in the secondary area, such as might indicate a concern with anti-social behaviour not reflected in reality.

8 Community Focus Groups

- a** We contracted RAND Europe (who sub-contracted to Ipsos MORI) to conduct community focus groups in the six areas where we conducted case file review to assess the breadth and understanding of shared local priorities for tackling anti-social behaviour and to gauge public awareness and support for the strategy for tackling anti-social behaviour locally. The groups were asked to consider:
- to what extent there are shared local priorities for tackling anti-social behaviour;
 - the quality of access to the agencies dealing with anti-social behaviour;
 - what preventive and community improvement schemes are in place in their area and public awareness of such schemes;
 - how much input they have in determining the nature of those schemes and the anti-social behaviour strategy;
 - which interventions they consider the most effective; and
 - what impact the strategy has had on levels of anti-social behaviour and local perceptions of the level of anti social behaviour.
- b** The individuals invited to participate in the focus groups were selected through a quota sampling method, whereby the selection of the sample is made by the interviewer, who has been given quotas to fill from specified sub-groups of the population. The following groups were used in the focus group locations as per **Figure 17 overleaf**.

17 Criteria for selection of focus group participants

Location	Date	Socio-Economic Grade	Age	Number in focus group
Wear Valley	29/08/06	ABC1	35 +	8
Easington	30/08/06	C2DE	21–35	4
Liverpool	04/09/06	C1C2	16–21	4
Manchester	05/09/06	C1C2	35+	8
Exeter	13/09/06	ABC1	35+	9
Hackney	14/09/06	C2DE	21–35	8 ¹

Source: National Audit Office

NOTES

¹ The first focus group in Hackney had to be re-scheduled as only one person attended.

Socio economic grade is the classification used by market research organisations. The classification assigns households to a grade, usually based on the occupation and employment status of the chief income earner.

Rationale for selection of areas for local visits, behaviours to investigate and interventions to be used in the analysis of cost and effectiveness

9 Selection of areas for local visits

- a** Pilot visits were carried out to the Bournemouth Youth Offending Team, the Shelter project in Rochdale, and to Watford where we tested and refined our methodology.
- b** Factors were identified which are likely to affect or reflect the level of Anti Social Behaviour in a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership area. The factors are as follows:
 - level of deprivation;
 - presence of a dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and team;
 - level of criminal damage occurring in the area;
 - perceptions of levels of anti-social behaviour in the relevant local authority area, according to Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) or British Crime Survey for Wales (BCS);
 - whether the area is a Together Action Area or a Trailblazer Area; and
 - degree of urbanity/rurality.

- c** We selected six areas which give a balance across these criteria. In these areas we carried out the full local visit programme. This approach enabled us to identify examples of good practice, and also to assess the impact that different social and institutional contexts have on the apparent impact of different interventions.
- d** In addition we selected six areas to conduct shorter visits, some of which were of special interest because of the innovative or unusual approaches taken to dealing with anti-social behaviour, for example, an anti-social behaviour response court or expert prosecutor. In these areas we carried out a restricted programme consisting of structured interviews and cost seminars as per **Figure 18**.

10 Selection of interventions for analysis of cost and effectiveness

- a** A spectrum of intervention (see **Figure 19 on page 36**) was devised which shows the range of interventions available to the authorities between an individual being recognised as at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour and the individual being convicted of a criminal offence or being evicted. To maintain the focus of the study we selected three interventions which were used for the analysis of impact and six interventions which were costed. The following criteria were used in selection:
 - the interventions cover the whole range of the spectrum, from the point of an individual actively engaging in anti-social behaviour;
 - the interventions are commonly used in most areas of England and Wales;
 - the interventions are aimed at an identifiable individual engaged in anti-social behaviour;
 - the interventions are appropriate to the three types of behaviour selected; and
 - the selection includes interventions designed for both youth and adults.
- b** The interventions costed were warning letters, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, fixed penalty notices, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, conviction for breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order and housing injunctions. Warning letters, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders were used for the analysis of impact. A further two interventions were chosen for their special interest, although we were aware that their low usage would limit our ability to quantitatively analyse their usage. Individual Support Orders and Parenting Contracts were investigated but not costed.

Review of the Together Campaign

11 Together Campaign review

- a** We reviewed the strategy and resources employed by the Home Office in combating anti-social behaviour in their Together campaign. This was carried out through interviews with Home Office staff at the Anti Social Behaviour Unit and a review of key documents.

Review of third party research

12 Literature Review

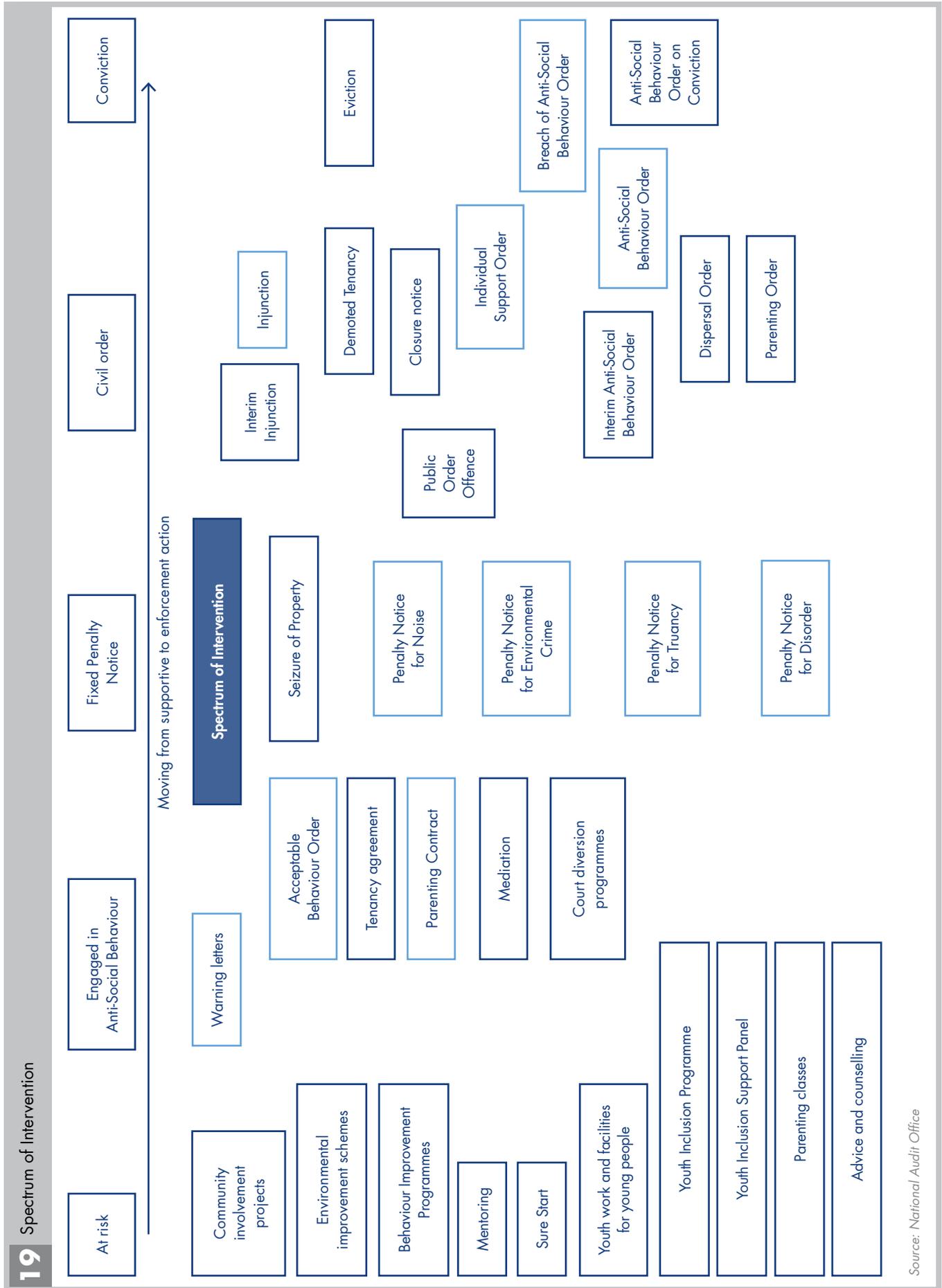
- a** We contracted RAND Europe to review all relevant published literature on anti-social behaviour. In particular they considered research on:
- the effectiveness of prevention schemes; and
 - cost savings resulting from diverting a potential perpetrator from a life of anti social behaviour or crime, including both costs to the criminal justice system and costs to the community.

The literature review is available on the National Audit Office website at www.nao.org.uk.

18 Areas selected for local area visits

Area	Type of visit	Urban /Rural	Deprivation Index	Percentage perceiving high levels of ASB according to BVPI	Incidents of ASB related criminal damage per 100,000 of the population	Trailblazer/ Action Area	Schemes of special interest
Corby	Short	Urban	27.07	69.4	2,939	N/A	N/A
Easington	Full	Rural	41.75	60.9	1,605	Action Area	N/A
Exeter	Full	Urban	21.58	37.9	1,215	Action Area	N/A
Hackney	Full	Urban	45.06	60.1	1,173	Action Area	ASB prosecutor
Liverpool	Full	Urban	49.78	51.7	2,462	Trailblazer	Community Justice Centre and ASB prosecutor
Manchester	Full	Urban	48.91	45.8	2,780	Trailblazer	ASB Response Court and ASB prosecutor
Merthyr Tydfil	Short	Urban	43.29	Data not available	1,624	N/A	ASB prosecutor
Newham	Short	Urban	40.41	19.8	999	N/A	Tackling graffiti
North Cornwall	Short	Rural	22.82	30.2	912	N/A	No ASB Co-ordinator
North Lincolnshire	Short	Rural	21.23	34.2	2,325	N/A	No ASB Co-ordinator
Nottingham	Short	Urban	41.75	59.4	3,230	Action Area	N/A
Wear Valley	Full	Rural	32.57	36.2	1,938	N/A	N/A

Sources: websites of Department for Communities and Local Government, National Assembly for Wales, DEFRA, HBOS, Home Office, Together.gov.uk, BVPI and criminal damage data supplied by the Home Office.



Source: National Audit Office

13 Third Party Contacts

a We met with and consulted a range of public sector and charitable organisations to gather background information on the issues surrounding anti-social behaviour. Organisations which assisted with our research are:

- Association of Youth Offending Team Managers;
- Audit Commission;
- Bournemouth and Poole Youth Offending Team;
- Chance UK;
- Children's Society;
- Crime and Society Foundation, King's College London;
- Crown Prosecution Service;
- Institute of Criminal Policy Research, King's College London;
- HM Courts Service;
- Home Office;
- Home Affairs Select Committee;
- Ipsos MORI;
- National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders;
- National Community Safety Network;
- Positive Approaches (Thames Valley Partnership);
- Prime Minister's Delivery Unit;
- Revolving Doors;
- Sentencing Guidelines Panel;
- Shelter;
- University of Leeds;
- University of Sheffield; and
- Youth Justice Board.

14 Reference panel

a We invited key stakeholders and experts in the field to form an expert panel. The panel were asked to give their views and advice throughout the study, including a review of the proposed methodology. The panel consisted of:

- Michelle Bernasconi, Winner of a Taking A Stand Award;
- Sallie Bridgen, North West Regional Director, Shelter;
- Judith Edwards, Policy Manager, Victim Support;
- Mike Goodwin, ASB lead for the Association of Chief Police Officers (followed by David Cleaver of Leicestershire Constabulary);
- Mike Hough, Director, Institute of Criminal Policy Research, King's College London;
- Janet Males, Chair of the Sentencing Policy and Practice Committee, Magistrates' Association;
- Gracia McGrath, Director, Chance UK; and
- Stuart Douglass, representing the Local Government Association.

15 Structured interviews with perpetrators (and some parents)

a We undertook structured interviews with ten adults at a residential hostel in London and ten young people who took part in a youth scheme in Hartlepool, some of whom also brought along their parents. All of these individuals had received some form of anti-social behaviour intervention. We questioned them about the nature of the anti-social behaviour in which they had been involved, the intervention(s) which they had received and how these had impacted upon their behaviour. We also asked whether they had also been the victim of anti-social behaviour.

APPENDIX TWO

The Home Office typology of anti-social behaviour

Misuse of public space	Disregard for community/personal wellbeing	Acts directed at people	Environmental damage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drug/substance misuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Taking drugs ■ Sniffing volatile substances ■ Discarding needles/drug paraphernalia ■ Drug dealing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Crack houses ■ Presence of dealers or users ■ Street drinking ■ Aggressive begging ■ Prostitution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Soliciting ■ Cards in phone boxes ■ Discarded condoms ■ Kerb crawling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Loitering ■ Pestering residents ■ Illegal campsites ■ Vehicle-related nuisance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inconvenient/illegal parking ■ Car repairs on the street/in gardens ■ Abandoning cars ■ Sexual acts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inappropriate sexual conduct ■ Indecent exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Noise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Noisy neighbours ■ Noisy cars/motorbikes ■ Loud music ■ Alarms (persistent ringing/malfunction) ■ Noise from pubs/clubs ■ Noise from business/industry ■ Rowdy behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shouting and swearing ■ Fighting ■ Drunken behaviour ■ Hooliganism/loutish behaviour ■ Nuisance behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Urinating in public ■ Setting fires (not directed at specific persons/property) ■ Inappropriate use of fireworks ■ Throwing missiles ■ Climbing on buildings ■ Impeding access to communal areas ■ Games in restricted/inappropriate areas ■ Misuse of air guns ■ Letting down tyres ■ Hoax calls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ False calls to emergency services ■ Inappropriate vehicle use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Joyriding ■ Racing cars ■ Off-road motorcycling ■ Cycling/skateboarding in pedestrian areas/footpaths ■ Animal related problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Uncontrolled animals ■ Dog fouling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Intimidation/harassment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Groups of individuals making threats ■ Verbal abuse ■ Bullying ■ Following people ■ Pestering people ■ Voyeurism ■ Sending nasty/offensive letters ■ Obscene/nuisance phone calls ■ Menacing gestures ■ Can be on the grounds of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Race ■ Sexual orientation ■ Gender ■ Religion ■ Disability ■ Age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Criminal damage/vandalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Graffiti ■ Damage to bus shelters ■ Damage to phone kiosks ■ Damage to street furniture ■ Damage to buildings ■ Damage trees/plants/hedges ■ Litter/rubbish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dropping litter/chewing gum ■ Dumping rubbish (including in own garden) ■ Fly-tipping ■ Fly-posting

APPENDIX THREE

Interventions

Power	Imposed by	Imposed against	Effect	Effect of breach
Acceptable Behaviour Contract	Police, local housing office, schools, social services.	Anyone thought to be committing anti-social behaviour.	Voluntary agreement to try to curb anti-social behaviour informally, avoiding the need for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order.	Agency may try to secure Anti-social Behaviour Order and use breach of Acceptable Behaviour Contract as relevant evidence.
Anti-Social Behaviour Order	Magistrates on application of police, local authorities, Registered Social Landlords, or Housing Action Trusts.	Someone aged 10+ who has committed anti-social acts, where necessary to protect the public from further acts.	All acts specified in the order (on discretion of magistrate) prohibited for at least two years (as specified).	Criminal offence: possible five years imprisonment.
Crack House Closure Order	Magistrates on application from the police.	Premises that have been used in connection with use, production or supply of Class A drugs.	Premises are closed to all persons whom the court decides for up to three months.	Imprisonment of up to three months and possible level 5 fine.
Demoted tenancies	Court, on application of local authorities, Registered Social Landlords and Housing Action Trusts.	A tenant guilty of anti-social conduct or unlawful activity.	Secure or assured tenancy ended and replaced with a demoted tenancy.	Possible possession proceedings, resulting in eviction.
Dispersal power	The police.	A group of people congregating in a designated area (which must be an area with persistent anti-social behaviour).	Police officer or Community Support Officer can require a group to disperse without evidence that it is causing anti-social behaviour.	Refusal to follow the officer's directions to disperse is an offence: possible level 4 fine or three months imprisonment.
Penalty Notices for Disorder	Police, Community Support Officers, other persons accredited by the Chief Constable.	Anyone aged 16+ guilty of any of the listed offences, including drunkenness offences.	£50 fine (recently increased from £40) for most offences; £80 for more serious offences. No criminal record.	Non-payment would result in prosecution for the matter in which the notice was given.
Housing Act Injunction	County or High Court, on application of Registered Social Landlords, Housing Action Trusts or local housing authorities.	A person over the age of 18 who has acted anti-socially, used premises for unlawful purposes or breached the terms of their tenancy.	Conduct specified in the injunction prohibited.	Contempt of court: possible two years imprisonment/ unlimited fine.

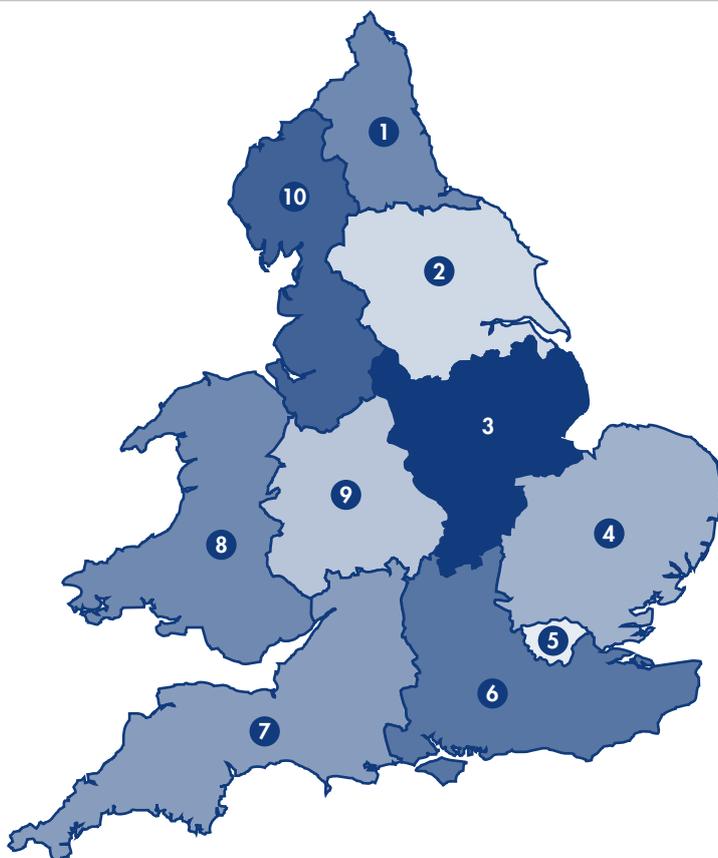
Power	Imposed by	Imposed against	Effect	Effect of Breach
Individual Support Order	Magistrates, to accompany Anti-social Behaviour Orders.	10-17 year olds who have been given an Anti-social Behaviour Order.	Aims to complement an Anti-Social Behaviour Order by addressing the causes of behaviour. Can require attendance at two sessions per week for six months.	Criminal Offence: possible level 3 fine (£1,000 or £250 if child is under the age of 14 at the time of the conviction).
Parenting Contracts	Youth Offending Team	Parent of a child or young person who has been or is likely to be involved in crime or anti-social activity.	Voluntary agreement by the parent to agree to the requirements of the team and by the team to support the parent.	Breaching an agreement is not a criminal offence and there are no legal consequences.
Parenting Order	Magistrates, to accompany an Anti-social behaviour Order or criminal conviction or else on application of the Youth Offending Team.	Parents of Anti-social children who have refused to co-operate on a voluntary basis.	Emphasis is on improving parental skills through attendance at a parenting programme. Can impose other requirements.	Criminal offence: possible level 3 fine (£1,000).

Source: Adapted from Home Affairs Select Committee report on Anti-Social Behaviour, 2004-05.

APPENDIX FOUR

Map of Trailblazer and Action Areas

- 1 North East**
Easington
Gateshead
Middlesbrough
Newcastle upon Tyne
South Tyneside
Sunderland (T)
- 2 Yorkshire and Humberside**
Doncaster
Hull
Kirklees
Wakefield
York
Sheffield (T)
Leeds (T)
- 3 East Midlands**
Derby
Leicester
Northampton
Nottingham
- 4 East of England**
Tendring
Great Yarmouth
Harlow
Ipswich
Norwich
Peterborough
Southend on Sea
Watford
- 5 London**
Hackney
Southwark
Westminster (T)
Camden (T)
- 6 South East**
Canterbury
Dover
Hastings
Oxford
Portsmouth
Reading
Slough
Southampton
Brighton (T)
- 7 South West**
Bournemouth
Exeter
Gloucester
Plymouth
Swindon
Bristol (T)
- 8 Wales**
Cardiff
Newport
Swansea
- 9 West Midlands**
Coventry
Hodge Hill
Sandwell
Wolverhampton
Birmingham (T)
- 10 North West**
Wirral
Blackburn
Bolton
Burnley
Chester
Oldham
Salford
Liverpool (T)
Manchester (T)



Source: National Audit Office using Home Office data

NOTE

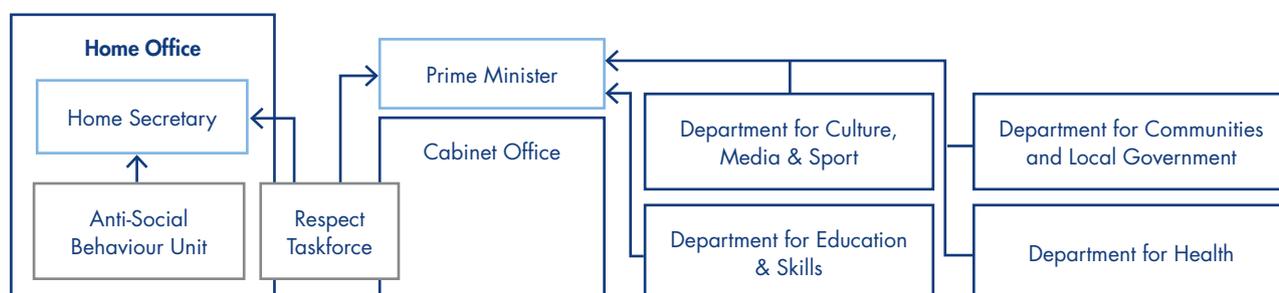
"Trailblazers" marked with a bracketed T.

APPENDIX FIVE

Bodies involved in Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, Strategy and Delivery

Bodies responsible for setting high level Policy

Government

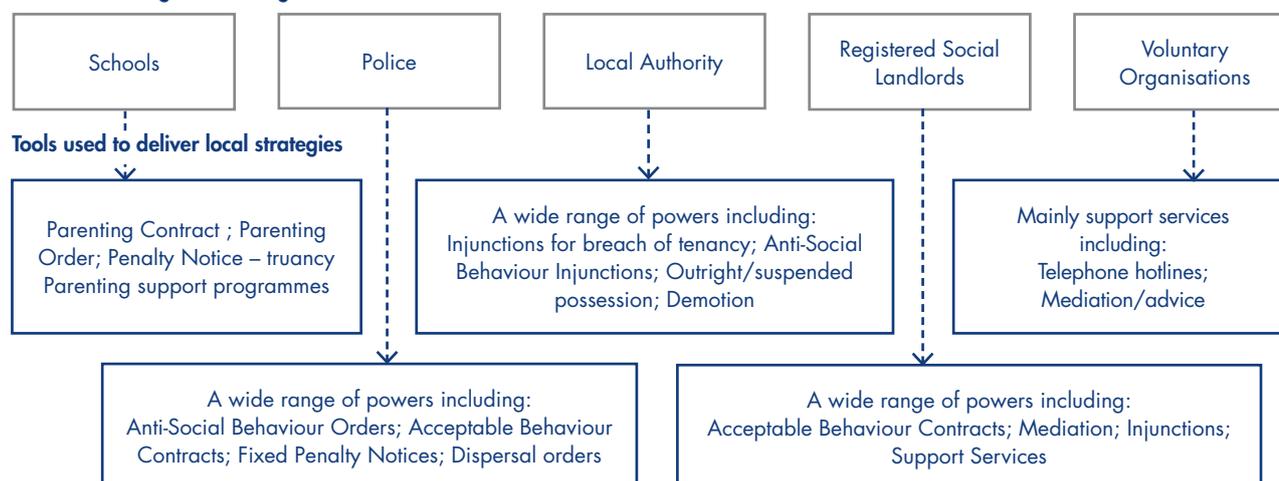


Bodies setting local strategies and overseeing performance

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership with representatives from:



Bodies delivering local strategies



APPENDIX SIX

Conclusions and recommendations from the Youth Justice Board's report on Anti-Social Behaviour Orders⁶⁰

Conclusions

The development of effective strategies for addressing anti-social behaviour among young people is complex, and raises a range of dilemmas. Professionals involved in the decision-making process inevitably have different views of the place of Anti-social Behaviour Orders in such strategies. Those who see their role principally in terms of community protection are generally less critical of enforcement-type measures than those whose predominant concern is working directly with young people to change their behaviour. Effective practice may in future depend on achieving a balance between those perspectives: one that is sensitive to the needs both of the (frequently disadvantaged and excluded) young people, and of the communities in which they reside.

Recommendations

- Many professionals suggested that a tiered approach, involving a progressive range of alternative interventions, seemed more likely to result in an effective use of local preventive resources, and might be better able to engage young people exhibiting difficult behaviour.
- Greater involvement of Youth Offender Teams in the decision-making process would ensure that appropriate diversionary options are fully explored.
- Revised guidance could help ensure that Anti-social Behaviour Orders in criminal proceedings and interim Anti-social Behaviour Orders are reserved for circumstances where there are clear reasons for pursuing such an order.
- New guidance could also recommend avoiding applications for Orders beyond the statutory minimum unless there is a clear need for prohibitions beyond two years.
- The process and effectiveness of Anti-social Behaviour Orders could be improved if they were subject to regular review.
- Restricting the number of prohibitions to the minimum necessary to target the particular behaviour of concern would make orders more realistic, and reduce the likelihood of non-compliance.
- Given the importance for young people of access to public space and spending time with friends, exclusion and non-association prohibitions could be used more sparingly, in order to reduce the need for breach proceedings.
- We [the Youth Justice Board] could not explore differences between ethnic groups as part of this study, and this is therefore an area for further research.

60 Solanki, Bateman, Boswell and Hill, *Anti-Social Behaviour Orders*, Youth Justice Board, 2006.

APPENDIX SEVEN

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