

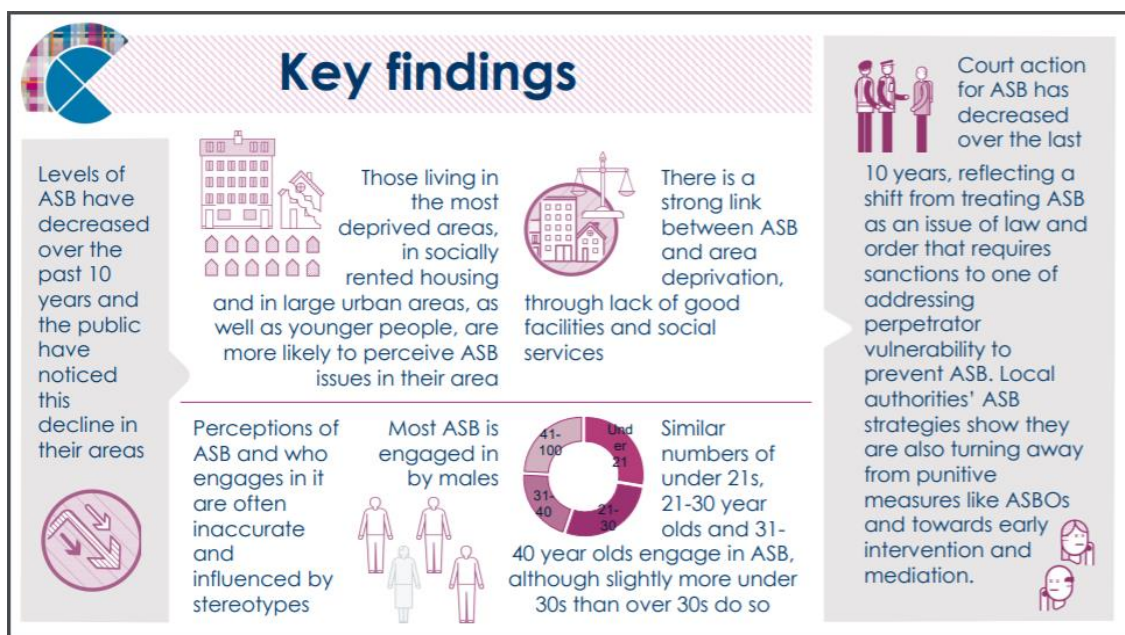
'The Scottish Picture of Anti-social Behaviour' - launch of research

On 11th November, the Scottish Community Safety Network launched a significant piece of research. ['The Scottish Picture of Antisocial Behaviour \(ASB\)' report](#), produced by Robyn Bailey, Social Researcher for the Scottish Government was commissioned as part of the ongoing conversation around a 'new dialogue' on ASB in Scotland.

Lorraine Gillies, Chief Officer of Scottish Community Safety Network said "We are delighted to launch this research. This important piece of work helps us gather an updated picture of antisocial behaviour in Scotland in terms of how common it is, which types are most common, who is engaging in it and what is driving it. The key findings from the report point to the need to address false perceptions around ASB and its prevalence but also how best to approach this issue in a holistic way, working with all members of the community. The report clearly indicates that great work in Scotland is already taking place but reiterates a message that we have further to go in finding solutions."


On the day, the research was launched through a webinar where Robyn Bailey took 49 attendees through a power point presentation followed by a Q and A session and general discussion. A recording of the event can be found [here](#).


The key findings and conclusions from the report were:





Conclusions


Harmonising data collected by LAs, using set categories (e.g. noise, vandalism) and recording standard outcomes data (e.g. case opened, resolved through mediation), could improve the regional picture of ASB



 We need to share an updated picture of ASB in Scotland to correct false perceptions: improving picture of prevalence, people of all ages engaging in ASB, noise most common)

 We need to continue moving towards early interventions and community-led approaches, e.g. signposting to services)

 We need to target at-risk individuals with holistic interventions, where different services communicate and share information to achieve a person-centred, supportive approach that avoids stigmatisation

 We need to address the root causes of ASB (e.g. poor sound insulation in housing, lack of facilities or social services in more deprived areas, unresolved mental health issues) as opposed to tackling symptoms

- ▶ This shift must continue to allow LAs, housing associations and third sector organisations to tailor approaches to local needs.
- ▶ This may require different skills, leadership and systemic change, which in turn requires investment and support.
- ▶ Different measures of success will also be needed, and we must design robust evaluations to test effectiveness of new approaches.

In the Q and A and following discussion, there was a consensus that the research was accurate and broadly reflected people's understanding and experience of ASB. Practitioners were pleased to have up to date research to use for evidence and as a tool for discussion with other partners.

Areas of the research that particularly resonated with attendees were:

move away from focus on young people	root causes and drivers of ASB	evidence to move forward with
confirmation 'on the right track'	balance between victims and perpetrator vulnerability	need to challenge stereotypes
need for community involvement	a united approach	keen public interest in this issue

Attendees felt more focus is needed on:

- More voices of those engaged with ASB need to be included.
- Victim's experiences.
- More research into mental health, alcohol and substance use.
- Need to engage communities better in the solutions.
- Research into good practice and research available.

The main themes of the discussion fell into the following areas:

Community

- Working with the community could make the biggest impact.
- Building trust and relationships is key to capacity building and engagement with the community and this might support the community to understand and accept the drivers of ASB and be part of the solution/ an agreed approach.
- Working with community organisations can be helpful as they have a good knowledge of what is happening on the ground and established relationships.
- Working in this way already takes place in many local authorities but it is not always easy to take other council areas/partners with you.
- Still the need for good educational campaigns around community responsibility.

Challenges

- One of practitioner's biggest concerns is the expectations of residents around what can be done to resolve ASB.
- Community feel it is the council's responsibility and are therefore sometimes reluctant to be involved, but does this breed an over-reliance on public services and feed sometimes unrealistic expectations?
- People define ASB differently and it can be subjective.
- Working with Elected Members is important to manage expectations of what can be done within the legal framework.
- Budget cuts having a huge impact as there are fewer and fewer resources for the victims anymore.
- Pandemic has increased existing inequalities further.
- Covid-19 pandemic has reduced tolerance and worries are that this will continue.
- Many of the solutions to the problems are not in the gift of community safety teams and stronger links with partners needed e.g. mental health, youth work, community groups, Community Planning Partnerships.
- It is not an area that is easy to get ownership or control of as responsibilities are split between different partners.
- Social media used well for assistance, but not used well to give feedback on the outcome.

Enforcement and prevention approaches

- Already a huge shift from enforcement to prevention. More focus on perpetrator vulnerability and behaviour change. Trauma informed practice will help with this direction of travel.
- Edinburgh council are looking at 'contextual safeguarding' – including social and youth work to be more holistic and have the community define what makes them feel safe.
- Need to consider police direct measures and support options not currently used instead of fines – make better use of restorative approaches, especially with young people where we know it is effective.



Next Steps – SCSN encourage all to use the research as a tool for discussion with partners, the community, elected members etc. We have plans in the New Year to offer further support with this and will be in touch in due course.