

‘ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR: PEOPLE, PLACE AND PERCEPTIONS’

1. Ipsos MORI, the polling and research organisation, published a report with this title in the summer. This has been made available free of charge to Stockton Council as a MORI customer.
2. A team of researchers, led by Ashley Ames (who some members of the Partnership will have seen present the results of ‘MORI 2006’), have looked in detail at the results of the 2006/07 BVPI (Best Value Performance Indicators) General User Surveys (also known as Local Government User Satisfaction Surveys) for all local authorities in England (not available for Wales), and have analysed a range of key variables, i.e.
 - a) level of deprivation
 - b) population density
 - c) population inflow
 - d) proportion of residents aged 25 years and under
 - e) increased level of violent crime

which they believe have the main influence, accounting for 58% of the variance in perception of anti-social behaviour (ASB) across the 387 local authority areas.

3. The researchers then used this model to predict what the level of concern about ASB should be in each local authority area, and compared it to the national survey result level. This showed that 50% of areas had a perception score lower (better) than predicted, and 40% of areas had a score which was higher (worse), with 10% on ‘no difference’. Results ranged from Wolverhampton, which had a gap of –12% (i.e. much lower level of concern about ASB than predicted) to Blyth Valley, which had a gap of +19%.
4. The 40 areas which benefited from inclusion in the main ‘Respect’ funding programme (which included Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, but not Stockton) were significantly more likely to record lower than predicted ASB ratings.
5. Attached as Appendix A are the results for Stockton (+1%), the other English authorities in our ‘Most Similar CDRPs’ Group, and the other Tees Valley authorities.
6. Attached as Appendix B is a comparison between levels of concern in Stockton about each of the seven ‘strands’ of the ASB covered by the survey, compared to the national averages.
7. The MORI team framed four hypotheses about why the gap between predicted and actual levels of concern varies between areas, i.e.

- a) the potential impact of communications – local agencies in some cases may be more effective in telling residents what is being done to tackle ASB and, in turn, reducing the number of people who perceive as a problem.
 - b) local agencies in some cases may be dealing with ASB significantly better than others, via use of specific tools and powers and effective deployment of risk assurance.
 - c) prevention measures and displacement activities may be more effective in some areas than others.
 - d) some areas may be more prone to negative perceptions because of their layout, infrastructure or positioning relative to other towns/cities.
8. MORI has identified a positive correlation between information provision and confidence in the ability of local agencies to tackle ASB, with residents who feel better informed being more likely to express confidence than those who do not, although their final conclusion is that

“ whilst communications can have a significant beneficial impact on public levels of confidence and attitudes towards the tackling of ASB in the short term, it may not have such a major immediate impact on perceived levels of ASB per se. Affecting change in people’s perception of local activity is likely to need sustained communications, backed up by action (to counter any potential accusations of spin over substance)”