House of Commons
Committee of Public Accounts

Tackling Anti–Social Behaviour

Forty–fourth Report of Session 2006–07

Report, together with formal minutes, oral and written evidence

Ordered by The House of Commons to be printed 9 July 2007
The Committee of Public Accounts

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Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee is Mark Etherton (Clerk), Philip Jones (Committee Assistant), Emma Sawyer (Committee Assistant), Pam Morris (Secretary), Anna Browning (Secretary), and Alex Paterson (Media Officer).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk, Committee of Public Accounts, House of Commons, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 5708; the Committee’s email address is pubaccom@parliament.uk.
# Contents

## Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions and recommendations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 The effectiveness of measures to tackle anti-social behaviour</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Minimising anti-social behaviour in the community</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Addressing poor quality of information within the Home Office</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal minutes</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnesses</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of written evidence</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Reports from the Committee of Public Accounts 2006–07</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

Anti-social behaviour by a small proportion of individuals and families brings misery and despair to local communities. Responding to reports of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales costs government agencies around £3.4 billion a year.1 There are also significant indirect costs to local communities and businesses, as well as emotional costs to victims and witnesses. In 2003 the Home Office formed the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit with an annual budget of £25 million to design and implement the Government’s policy on anti-social behaviour. In September 2005 the Government announced the creation of the cross government Respect Task Force to take forward the anti-social behaviour agenda and in January 2006 the Government published the Respect Action Plan.

Anti-social behaviour measures were first introduced in the mid 1990s, and since this time more powers and measures have been added to give local authorities, the police and others a toolkit of measures with which to tackle incidents of anti-social behaviour. People’s perception of the level of anti-social behaviour varies by gender, area and age, with people most likely to perceive high levels in areas of greatest social deprivation. Comparable local areas use different approaches to dealing with anti-social behaviour and there has been no comparative evaluation of the success of these approaches. Nor has there been a comprehensive evaluation of the use and success of the different measures and powers, making it difficult for the Home Office, the Respect Task Force and those dealing with anti-social behaviour to assess what works best.

On the basis of a Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General,2 the Committee examined the Home Office and the Respect Task Force on evidence emerging from the sample of 893 cases of individuals receiving anti-social behaviour interventions reviewed by the National Audit Office. Of this sample, around 46% related to people aged under 18 and 54% were over 18. In the absence of central data and national evaluations, the National Audit Office had used the sample 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. Some 65% of the people in the sample received only one intervention. The National Audit Office review also found, however, that a small core of people engaged repeatedly in anti-social behaviour with around 20% of their sample cases receiving over half of all interventions issued.

The Committee also questioned the Home Office about its recent disclosure that a backlog of 27,500 notifications of convictions of British citizens abroad had been passed to the Association of Chief Police Officers for checking and entering on the Police National Computer in March 2006 after being allowed to build up over several years.

1 Home Office, Defining and Measuring Anti-Social Behaviour, 2004
Conclusions and recommendations

1. There are currently at least 10 different interventions available to anti-social behaviour coordinators which have been introduced piecemeal over the last ten years all with different procedures to put them in place. The Home Office is planning to increase their number further. In the light of the low take up of some, such as the Individual Support Order, and the tendency of Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinators to use only a few measures, the Home Office should take stock of measures already on the statute book, consider whether all are necessary, and how to make them easier to understand and use at local level.

2. The lack of published data on the effectiveness of different measures to combat anti-social behaviour in different situations or with different groups of people has led to variation in the extent to which local areas use the interventions available to them. Decisions are based on local preferences and the familiarity of those in authority with the different types of measures, rather than an objective assessment of what works with different types of perpetrators. Evaluation of what works is also hampered by the lack of a standard data set on perpetrators’ characteristics. To enhance the effectiveness of measures to tackle anti-social behaviour the Home Office should:

   • develop and implement nationally an evaluation system to assess the comparative effectiveness of the individual measures and powers, and the extent to which socio-economic, geographic, ethnic, and age factors influence the outcomes achieved;
   
   • use the data collected to provide local anti-social behaviour teams with evidence based recommendations on what works best in which circumstances; and
   
   • specify a standard data set to be collected by local anti-social behaviour coordinators, so that all areas collect information on the use of measures against the same set of criteria, and in particular separating out data for young children from those nearing adulthood (where the different causal factors may apply), and collecting data on warning letters issued, so as to aid data comparisons and benchmarking.

3. Some 20% of anti-social behaviour cases reviewed by the National Audit Office received 55% of all interventions in the period covered by the case review, and people within this group with criminal convictions had an average of 50 each. Rigorous enforcement of breaches of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders is essential to tackle this group together with targeted interventions aimed at the underlying causes of anti-social behaviour underpinned by a requirement for individuals to take up support. Where Orders continue to be breached cases should be prosecuted swiftly and consideration should be given to referring cases to the Crown Court for sentencing where a custodial sentence can be considered.
4. The Home Office has encouraged local areas to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour by the enforcement of measures such as Anti-Social Behaviour Orders along with support for individuals, but in recent years, the emphasis has been mainly on enforcement. To enhance the effectiveness of the response to anti-social behaviour, both elements are necessary and the Home Office and the Respect Task Force should:

- work with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to make referrals to family intervention projects and other early intervention schemes a priority in cases involving children and young people whose chaotic home life puts them at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour;

- collate information from local areas on gaps in local area service provision, such as access to drug treatment or mental health services, to inform and action Social Exclusion Action Plan proposals, due to be published in summer 2007;

- periodically provide local anti-social behaviour co-ordinators and other community groups with details of diversionary schemes and award schemes of proven effectiveness used by other local areas to reward compliance and good behaviour, with a view to building a unified national self-help, advice and support network of local leaders who have already delivered successful community schemes;

- help overcome witnesses’ and victims’ fear of intimidation and retaliation by making up to date telephone support helpline numbers available through anti-social behaviour co-ordinators and police forces, and build a national support network involving local communities, the voluntary sector and “Taking a stand” award winners;

- collect and analyse data to establish whether local areas have adopted a robust and consistent approach to enforcing breaches of civil orders, including Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Parenting Orders, and whether there are blockages preventing local areas from dealing with breaches of Orders quickly.

5. The Home Office had not arranged for the Police National Computer to be updated for notifications of convictions for crimes committed abroad by UK citizens, allowing a backlog of some 27,500 cases to build up until updating actions commenced in 2006. The Police National Computer is used to check the criminal records of those seeking certain types of employment, for example those seeking to work with vulnerable groups. The Department has now reported that the backlog has been eliminated and that details of all relevant offenders have now been entered on to the Police National Computer. This process identified 2,198 individuals who had been involved in the most serious types of offences or had committed crimes of a sexual nature. The UK Central Authority for the Exchange of Criminal Records needs to maintain the momentum of their efforts to trace offenders, and the Home Office should report regularly on progress in locating them and referring them to the relevant police forces.
6. The provision of inaccurate data on perceptions of anti-social behaviour is the latest of several recent examples by the Home Office of its poor quality information systems and data. These weaknesses have included those which led the Comptroller and Auditor General to disclaim an opinion on the Home Office’s Resource Accounts for 2004–05, and the provision in 2005 and 2006 of inaccurate data on foreign national prisoners. Without reliable management information the Department can neither manage its business properly nor account for its stewardship, and it should develop a detailed Action Plan to improve the quality and accuracy of its management information and numerical data and arrange for progress to be audited.
The effectiveness of measures to tackle anti-social behaviour

1. Anti-social behaviour (Figure 1) impacts adversely on people’s quality of life, directly by causing fear, alarm and distress to victims and witnesses, and indirectly by, for example, disrupting local businesses and public transport services. These impacts tended to be felt more acutely by those living in ‘hard pressed’ or deprived areas, who were more likely to perceive high levels of anti-social behaviour, and who considered it a greater problem than those living in more affluent areas. The British Crime Survey shows that the percentage of the population that perceived high levels of anti-social behaviour in their local area fell from 21% in 2002–03 to 17% in 2005–06.

Figure 1: The Home Office typology of anti-social behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Misuse of public space</th>
<th>Disregard for community/personal wellbeing</th>
<th>Acts directed at people</th>
<th>Environmental damage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drug/substance misuse</td>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>Intimidation/harassment</td>
<td>Criminal damage/vandalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking drugs</td>
<td>Noisy neighbours</td>
<td>Groups of individuals making threats</td>
<td>Graffiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sniffing volatile substances</td>
<td>Noisy cars/motorbikes</td>
<td>Verbal abuse</td>
<td>Damage to bus shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discarding needles/drug paraphernalia</td>
<td>Loud music</td>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>Damage to phone boxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug dealing</td>
<td>Alarms (persistent ringing/malfunction)</td>
<td>Following people</td>
<td>Damage to street furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crack houses</td>
<td>Noise from pubs/clubs</td>
<td>Pestering people</td>
<td>Damage to buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of dealers or users</td>
<td>Noise from business/industry</td>
<td>Voyeurism</td>
<td>Damage to tress/plants/hedges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street drinking</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sending nasty/offensive letters</td>
<td>Litter/rubbish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aggressive begging</td>
<td></td>
<td>Obscene/nuisance</td>
<td>Dropping litter/chewing gum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soliciting</td>
<td>Shouting and swearing</td>
<td>phone calls</td>
<td>Dumping rubbish (including in own garden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cards in phone boxes</td>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>Menacing</td>
<td>Fly-tipping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discarded condoms</td>
<td>Drunken behaviour</td>
<td>gestures</td>
<td>Fly-posting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kerb crawling</td>
<td>Hooliganism/loutish behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Loitering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pestering residents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illegal campsites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vehicle-related nuisance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inconvenient/illegal parking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car repairs on the street/gardens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abandoning cars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual acts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inappropriate sexual conduct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indecent exposure</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3 Q 86
5 The British Crime Survey is an annual survey which asks over 50,000 people aged over 16 in England and Wales about crimes they have experienced in the past year.
6 No national data is collected on incidence of anti-social behaviour.
2. Over the past ten years the Home Office had developed many different interventions to tackle anti-social behaviour for use by a wide range of bodies (Figure 2). Interventions were usually applied on an escalating scale. Relatively low cost warning letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts were used for those engaged in less serious or less persistent anti-social behaviour whilst civil orders, including Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Closure Orders, Individual Support Orders and Parenting Orders, were usually reserved for more serious and persistent bad behaviour. The breach of civil orders, which prohibit or mandate specified actions, was a criminal offence and could be punished by a fine or imprisonment for up to five years.\(^7\)

**Figure 2: A wide range of interventions are available**

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

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

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

3. Some ten years after the first anti-social behaviour measures were introduced, no national evaluation of the effectiveness of the different anti-social behaviour interventions has been undertaken. Although the Home Office had commissioned a piece of research on the effectiveness of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in 2005 the results were inconclusive and the Home Office have not published them. The Home Office and the Respect Task Force were unable to provide information to the Committee about when those on Housing Injunctions, Parenting Contracts and Orders or Dispersal Powers had failed to meet their conditions. 8

4. The Home Office had made a conscious decision not to collect extensive data centrally from local areas and Crime and Disorder Partnerships on any aspect of anti-social behaviour, preferring instead to survey local areas once a year on their use of interventions. 9 In the absence of comprehensive data on the use and effectiveness of interventions, local areas’ different approaches to tackling anti-social behaviour cannot be evaluated effectively to broaden the range of measures applied and to provide guidance on what appears to work best in different situations. For example, no information was available on the use and effectiveness of warning letters, although the National Audit Office’s work had indicated that this was the least costly, but possibly the most effective initial intervention to deter those embarking on anti-social behaviour. 10

5. The Home Office and the Respect Task Force could not provide an insight into the trends underlying the use by local areas of the various powers and measures. For example, although they acknowledged the importance of providing support to young people served with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, they did not know why take up of Individual Support

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8 Qq 53, 54, 56; Ev 27
9 Qq 31, 74, 75
10 Qq 13, 14, 49, 55; C&AG’s Report, para 2.8
Orders, introduced in 2003, was so low: 5 in 2003–04 rising to 30 in 2004–05.\textsuperscript{11} There was no standard data set in use in local areas to collect and collate data. By not collecting, collating and analysing these data nationally, the sector as a whole has no access to empirical data on intervention success rates and the impact of socio-economic and geographical factors. The Home Office accepted that more evaluation would be useful to inform local action, for example, on the best ways to tackle young children as distinct from people near adulthood.\textsuperscript{12}

6. The sample of cases reviewed by the National Audit Office suggested that many individuals were responsible for relatively minor incidents of anti-social behaviour and that they desisted from such behaviour in response to one intervention (65\% of the 893 individuals sampled by the National Audit Office, see Figure 3). The most common intervention in the National Audit Office’s sample of cases was a warning letter (54\% of the sample received at least one warning letter). A hard core of perpetrators, however, went on to engage repeatedly in anti-social behaviour even after interventions. One fifth of the sample had received over half of the interventions, and within this group, those with convictions had an average of 50 convictions each. The person in the sample with the most extensive criminal record had 271 criminal convictions and had breached his Anti-Social Behaviour Order 25 times.\textsuperscript{13}

Figure 3: 93\% of people desisted from anti-social behaviour in the period covered by the case file review after three interventions

\textbf{NOTE}
\begin{itemize}
  \item a 65\% of people desisted from anti-social behaviour after Intervention 1
  \item b 85\% of people desisted from anti-social behaviour after Intervention 2
  \item c 93\% of people desisted from anti-social behaviour after Intervention 3
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{11} Qq 157–159
\textsuperscript{12} Qq 59, 100, 113, 114
\textsuperscript{13} Qq 17, 51, 105, 148
2 Minimising anti-social behaviour in the community

7. The Home Office had more recently begun to address the issue of providing support to those involved in Anti-Social Behaviour as part of a twin-track approach of providing enforcement and support. It had previously concentrated on putting in place the powers to tackle anti-social behaviour, but was now formally addressing the support needs of those involved in anti-social behaviour through the Respect Action Plan published in January 2006. Examples of supportive interventions included attendance at drug rehabilitation schemes, parenting classes or youth schemes. These could be used for individuals either at risk of becoming engaged in or already engaged in anti-social behaviour.14

8. Early intervention to address the risk of young people falling into anti-social behaviour is likely to be the most effective approach. For example, fully evaluated evidence from the Syracuse Study15 of 108 deprived families in the United States, who received home visits and day care from the third trimester of pregnancy until age five, had shown that ten years after the intervention ended, 6% of the target group had been referred to probation in comparison with 22% of a control group.16 In England, programmes such as Sure Start aimed to give every child the best start in life by bringing together at an early stage education, health, childcare and family support.

9. Sure Start and other early years intervention programmes are, however, most likely to be attended by children with compliant parents or carers, as take up is not mandatory. Older children at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour were often from family units already known to the police, social workers and educational welfare officers because of their chaotic lifestyles. Support services had tended to tackle individual members of the family, for example the police in respect of a father with a criminal background, social workers for a mother with depression and educational welfare officers with a child playing truant. Under the Respect Action Plan published in 2006, 50 family intervention projects were being set up across the country to look at the whole family, taking account of all issues affecting the family such as drug taking, mental health and the relationship between the parent(s) and children, as well as seeking to prevent anti-social behaviour.17

10. Getting different services, such as mental health teams and social service departments, to address the needs of those involved in anti-social behaviour was a major challenge because of the multi-faceted response required. Being able to mobilise support services such as social services and mental health teams was critical for many anti-social behaviour co-ordinators. The Social Exclusion Action Plan, to be published in summer 2007, was expected to address gaps in services and improve responsiveness. Perpetrators could also refuse support and could not be compelled to take up support even if it was necessary to

14 Qq 57, 97, 98
16 Qq 35, 37, 38
17 Qq 96, 156
address factors underlying their anti-social behaviour. The Respect Task Force was encouraging the use of Individual Support Orders and Parenting Orders which require people to take up support but the number of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders being issued with Individual Support Orders attached was still very low.\(^{18}\)

11. The Respect Task Force was promoting a theme of encouraging and rewarding perpetrators’ adherence to the terms of interventions whilst enforcing breaches rigorously. Diversionary activities, such as youth clubs, community action groups, sporting activities and vocational activities also had an important place alongside interventions to help channel people away from anti-social activities. Lack of community facilities could not, however, be an excuse for anti-social behaviour. Other local initiatives included schemes which promoted community service and neighbourhood pride, alongside less formal interventions, such as parenting classes. The Task Force could share examples of good practice. Hackney, for example, had given certificates to young people on completion of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts showing that praise could be effective in rewarding those who completed their interventions without further incidents.\(^{19}\)

12. Victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour may have a greater fear of intimidation and reprisal, as they often know the perpetrators and may see them daily. Special measures introduced in court had helped witnesses retain greater anonymity, but there was no national network of community advice or support services for victims or witnesses of anti-social behaviour, and local support and advice was patchy. There was a need to develop local community support networks, and the Respect Task Force had encouraged ‘Taking a Stand’ award winners to share their experiences. In Plymouth, for example, two award winners from Petals provided a telephone advice line.\(^{20}\) In 2002, when our predecessors took evidence on the provision of support to victims and witnesses of crime, they recommended that the Home Office should review arrangements for providing local and specialist support to vulnerable groups and for referral between services.\(^{21}\)

13. A relatively small core of people repeatedly engage in anti-social behaviour, causing misery and distress to local communities. Many such individuals already have criminal convictions and an Anti-Social Behaviour Order and some would be part of prolific and priority offender programmes. Powers existed to evict problem individuals or families if they were council or social housing tenants, but this had the effect of moving the problem on, rather than dealing with it. Encouraging people to accept co-ordinated support was often successful. Where people had received Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and breached these repeatedly, however, a pragmatic approach had to be taken which included returning people to court promptly and consideration of the use of custodial sentences.\(^{22}\)

\(^{18}\) Q 81; Ev 27; C&AG’s Report, paras 3.6, 3.7  
\(^{19}\) Q 95, 103  
\(^{20}\) Q 104  
\(^{21}\) Q 82, 83; Committee of Public Accounts, Seventeenth Report of Session 2001–02, Helping Victims and Witnesses: The Work of Victim Support, HC 635  
\(^{22}\) C&AG’s Report, Appendix 3; Q 81, 116, 127, 146
14. Communities were frustrated and concerned by the lack of rapid action by the courts to obtain and act on breaches of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. The Home Office was unable to provide specific information on the time taken to bring cases relating to Anti-Social Behaviour Orders to court. However, in an effort to improve the responsiveness of the courts to breaches of such Orders the Home Office had introduced 157 Anti-Social Behaviour Response Courts situated within 31 Criminal Justice Areas, together with a network of 14 specialist anti-social behaviour prosecutors. They were also disseminating best practice on the use of legal powers through Respect Action Day.\textsuperscript{23} HM Courts Service has also recently published a good practice guide to help the courts deal with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders which includes consideration of methods for speeding up hearings on breaches of these Orders.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{23} C&AG's Report, para 2.20; Ev 24-25
\textsuperscript{24} HM Courts Service, \textit{Anti-Social Behaviour Orders Good Practice Guide, April 2007}
3 Addressing poor quality of information within the Home Office

15. The Home Office made a commitment to improve data quality and introduced a new quality assurance scheme in its reform plan, published in July 2006, which aimed to improve public confidence in delivery of its core business.\textsuperscript{25} Despite recognising the importance of accurate data, the Home Office provided data to the National Audit Office on perceptions of anti-social behaviour which the Home Office later admitted was incorrect and revised data was submitted in advance of our hearing.\textsuperscript{26} An internal review of 160 data sets in the Home Office had identified 30 which were inadequate. These data sets were being reviewed urgently as part of the Reform plan.\textsuperscript{27}

16. The Comptroller & Auditor General disclaimed an opinion on the Home Office’s Resource Accounts for 2004–05 because weaknesses in the accounting system and financial management within the Home Office meant that the Department was unable to submit its accounts in time for the audit to be completed to the statutory timetable. His examination was also severely limited by the fact that the Home Office had not maintained proper books and records which would have enabled it to disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Department.

17. Inaccurate data was also provided to this Committee in 2005 and 2006 on the release of foreign national prisoners released from custody without consideration for deportation. In July 2006 this Committee concluded that the Home Office did not have a grip on the issue of foreign nationals released from prison and not deported. It could not provide any assurance that foreign nationals were no longer being released from custody without consideration of deportation or that definitive action was being taken to improve the situation.\textsuperscript{28}

18. In 2004, this Committee took evidence on a Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General on the Criminal Records Bureau (the Bureau), in which the Comptroller and Auditor General noted that the Bureau was unable to check the criminal history of British applicants during periods they had spent abroad because of difficulties in accessing overseas criminal databases.\textsuperscript{29} Prior to 2005, a 1959 Council of Europe convention provided for more than 40 member states to exchange data on the criminal convictions of their citizens in other member countries, but these arrangements operated on a fragmented and piecemeal basis. In March 2006, following a 2005 European Council decision, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) was designated the mandatory central authority for mutual legal assistance for this country. The Home Office passed to ACPO a backlog of 27,500 notifications, some of which went back several years, and which had not

\textsuperscript{25} From Improvement to Transformation, Home Office, July 2006, paras 44-45
\textsuperscript{26} Ev 20
\textsuperscript{27} Qq 1, 2
\textsuperscript{29} Qq 3, 4; C&AG’s Report, Criminal Records Bureau: Delivering Safer Recruitment? HC (2003–04) 266, para 2.14
been entered on the Police National Computer. Some 10 months later, details of just 260 of the 540 serious notifications had been entered onto the Police National Computer. On the 22 May 2007 the Department reported that the backlog has now been eliminated and that details of all relevant offenders have now been entered on to the Police National Computer. This process identified 2,198 individuals who had been involved in the most serious types of offences or had committed crimes of a sexual nature. The individuals involved in these cases have been flagged on the Violent and Sexual Offenders’ Register and/or, where possible, been referred to police forces to consider monitoring. In many cases, however, the UK Central Authority for the Exchange of Criminal Records is not aware of the current location of the offender and has therefore been unable to refer them to the relevant police force.30

19. The Accounting Officer response to the Department’s Capability Review in July 2006 committed the Home Office to improve urgently the quality and accuracy of its management information and numerical data. The Home Office needs to change attitudes within the Department so that problems are surfaced and addressed promptly, enabling public confidence in the Department to be rebuilt.31 The Report to the Permanent Secretary as to how and why the backlog of cases had arisen identified systemic weaknesses in accountability, working practices, risk management and leadership.32 These themes are being addressed as part of the Home Office Reform Plan, published in July 2006. Following the Inquiry a misconduct case was brought against one member of Home Office staff and internal disciplinary action short of dismissal was taken. We understand that lessons learned from the Inquiry are being promulgated across the Department.

31 Qq 27, 28
Formal minutes

Monday 9 July 2007

Members present:

Mr Edward Leigh, in the Chair

Mr Richard Bacon
Mr David Curry
Mr Ian Davidson
Mr Philip Dunne

Ian Lucas
Mr Austin Mitchell
Mr Don Touhig

Draft Report

Draft Report (Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 19 read and agreed to.

Conclusions and recommendations read and agreed to.

Summary read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Forty-fourth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned until Wednesday 10 October at 3.30 pm.]
Witnesses

Monday 15 January 2007

Sir David Normington KCB, Permanent Secretary, Home Office, and
Ms Louise Casey, Government Co-ordinator for the Respect Task Force

List of written evidence

1 Home Office Ev 20, 24
2 National Audit Office Ev 29
3 Barnardo’s Ev 30
## List of Reports from the Committee of Public Accounts 2006–07

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Report No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Report</td>
<td>Tsunami: Provision of support for humanitarian assistance</td>
<td>HC 25 (Cm 7018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Report</td>
<td>Improving literacy and numeracy in schools (Northern Ireland)</td>
<td>HC 108 (Cm 7035)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Report</td>
<td>Collections Management in the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland</td>
<td>HC 109 (Cm 7035)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Report</td>
<td>Gas distribution networks: Ofgem’s role in their sale, restructuring and future regulation</td>
<td>HC 110 (Cm 7019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Report</td>
<td>Postcomm and the quality of mail services</td>
<td>HC 111 (Cm 7018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Report</td>
<td>Gaining and retaining a job: the Department for Work and Pensions support for disabled people</td>
<td>HC 112 (Cm 7019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Report</td>
<td>Department for Work and Pensions: Using leaflets to communicate with the public about services and entitlements</td>
<td>HC 133 (Cm 7020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Report</td>
<td>Tackling Child Obesity—First Steps</td>
<td>HC 157 (Cm 7020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Report</td>
<td>The Paddington Health Campus Scheme</td>
<td>HC 244 (Cm 7076)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth Report</td>
<td>Fines Collection</td>
<td>HC 245 (Cm 7020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh Report</td>
<td>Supporting Small Business</td>
<td>HC 262 (Cm 7076)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth Report</td>
<td>Excess Votes 2005–06</td>
<td>HC 346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteenth Report</td>
<td>Smarter Food Procurement in the Public Sector</td>
<td>HC 357 (Cm 7077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourteenth Report</td>
<td>Ministry of Defence: Delivering digital tactical communications through the Bowman CIP Programme</td>
<td>HC 358 (Cm 7077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteenth Report</td>
<td>The termination of the PFI contract for the National Physical Laboratory</td>
<td>HC 359 (Cm 7077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixteenth Report</td>
<td>The Provision of Out-of-Hours Care in England</td>
<td>HC 360 (Cm 7077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventeenth Report</td>
<td>Financial Management of the NHS</td>
<td>HC 361 (Cm 7077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighteenth Report</td>
<td>DFID: Working with Non-Governmental and other Civil Society Organisations to promote development</td>
<td>HC 64 (Cm 7077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nineteenth Report</td>
<td>A Foot on the Ladder: Low Cost Home Ownership Assistance</td>
<td>HC 134 (Cm 7077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twentieth Report</td>
<td>Department of Health: The National Programme for IT in the NHS</td>
<td>HC 390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-first Report</td>
<td>Progress in Combat Identification</td>
<td>HC 486 (Cm 7151)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-second Report</td>
<td>Tax credits</td>
<td>HC 487 (Cm 7151)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-third Report</td>
<td>The office accommodation of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and its sponsored bodies</td>
<td>HC 488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-fourth Report</td>
<td>Ofwat: Meeting the demand for water</td>
<td>HC 286 (Cm 7151)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-fifth Report</td>
<td>Update on PFI debt refinancing and the PFI equity market</td>
<td>HC 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-sixth Report</td>
<td>Department for Work and Pensions: Progress in tackling pensioner poverty—encouraging take-up of entitlements</td>
<td>HC 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-seventh Report</td>
<td>Delivering successful IT-enabled business change</td>
<td>HC 113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-eighth Report</td>
<td>ASPIRE—the re-competition of outsourced IT services</td>
<td>HC 179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-ninth Report</td>
<td>Department of Health: Improving the use of temporary nursing staff in NHS acute and foundation trusts</td>
<td>HC 142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirtieth Report</td>
<td>The Modernisation of the West Coast Main Line</td>
<td>HC 189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-first Report</td>
<td>Central government’s use of consultants</td>
<td>HC 309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-second Report</td>
<td>The right of access to open countryside</td>
<td>HC 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-third Report</td>
<td>Assessing the value for money of OGCbuying.solutions</td>
<td>HC 275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-fourth Report</td>
<td>Recruitment and Retention in the Armed Forces</td>
<td>HC 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-fifth Report</td>
<td>BBC outsourcing: the contract between the BBC and Siemens Business Service</td>
<td>HC 118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-sixth Report</td>
<td>Reserve Forces</td>
<td>HC 729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>HC printing number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-eighth Report</td>
<td>Sure Start Children’s Centres</td>
<td>HC 261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-ninth Report</td>
<td>Preparations for the London Olympic and Paralympic Games—risk assessment and management</td>
<td>HC 377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortieth Report</td>
<td>Dr Foster Intelligence: A joint venture between the Information Centre and Dr Foster LLP</td>
<td>HC 368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forty-first Report</td>
<td>Improving procurement in further education colleges in England</td>
<td>HC 477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forty-second Report</td>
<td>The Shareholder Executive and Public Sector Businesses</td>
<td>HC 409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forty-third Report</td>
<td>The Restructuring of British Energy</td>
<td>HC 892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forty-fourth Report</td>
<td>Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour</td>
<td>HC 246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reference number of the Treasury Minute to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.
Oral evidence

Taken before the Committee of Public Accounts

on Monday 15 January 2007

Members present:

Mr Edward Leigh, in the Chair
Annette Brooke Mr Austin Mitchell
Mr Ian Davidson Dr John Pugh
Helen Goodman Mr Don Touhig
Mr Sadiq Khan Mr Alan Williams

Sir John Bourn KCB, Comptroller and Auditor General and Aileen Murphie, Director, National Audit Office, were in attendance and gave oral evidence.
Marius Gallaher, Alternate Treasury Officer of Accounts, was in attendance.

REPORT BY THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL
HOME OFFICE: TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (HC 99)


Q1 Chairman: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Public Accounts Committee, where today we are considering the Comptroller and Auditor General’s Report, Tackling anti-social behaviour. We welcome back to our Committee Sir David Normington, who is Permanent Secretary at the Home Office and who is appearing before us as Accounting Officer. We also welcome Louise Casey, who is head of the Respect Task Force.

Sir David Normington: I do recall the Report, although I do not know it in detail. If you are talking about the information that we provided to the National Audit Office, which I have written to you about, let us be clear that we provided that information to the NAO at the beginning of 2006. It was a very small technical problem, and we have owned up to it; it was an error in the analysis of a Department for Communities and Local Government survey that related to local government.

Q2 Chairman: You have answered that question, so could you answer the second the question I gave you? In paragraph 2.12, we specifically talked about the CRB not being able to access information. That is relevant to the efficiency of your Department. After all, you are the Accounting Officer, are you not? You have signed off a statement of internal control, with its assurance to us that you have reliable information systems in place. Obviously, there is now evidence in the public domain that you do not—in relation to the issue that I have just mentioned, in relation to what we were discussing in our Committee early last year, and also now in relation to the latest problem regarding criminal records of UK nationals from other EU countries. You have signed off a statement of internal control with an assurance that you have reliable information systems in place. Is that a fair comment?

Sir David Normington: I do recall the Report, although I do not know it in detail. If you are talking about the information that we provided to the National Audit Office, which I have written to you about, let us be clear that we provided that information to the NAO at the beginning of 2006. It was a very small technical problem, and we have owned up to it; it was an error in the analysis of a Department for Communities and Local Government survey that related to local government.

Q3 Chairman: You have answered that question, so could you answer the second the question I gave you? In paragraph 2.12, we specifically talked about the CRB not being able to access information. That is relevant to the efficiency of your Department. After all, you are the Accounting Officer, are you not? You have signed off a statement of internal control, with its assurance to us that you have reliable information systems in place. Obviously, there is now evidence in the public domain that you do not—in relation to the issue that I have just mentioned, in relation to what we were discussing in our Committee early last year, and also now in relation to the latest problem regarding criminal records of UK nationals from other EU countries. You have signed off a statement of internal control with an assurance that you have reliable information systems when clearly you do not. Is that a fair comment?

Sir David Normington: I stand by the statement that I made. The specific issues that are in the public domain at the moment are about something that was not in your Report in 2004. It is about something that has since come to light about the notification of UK citizens—

1 Ev 20-23
Q4 Chairman: Our Report simply says that the Bureau cannot access information around the country so I would have thought that that is quite pertinent. We warned you about it and you did nothing. It is another example of your Department not being fit for purpose despite the fact you have signed off a statement of internal control.

Sir David Normington: Mr Chairman, please let me try to answer. First, that is a specific issue regarding notifications from other countries to ours and whether that information has gone on to the Police National Computer. It is a very serious matter that backlogs have occurred and for most of this year we have been trying to put that right. It is not today’s problem; it is a problem that we have been tackling since the spring. We put in place new arrangements in May to tackle that and have given the Association of Chief Police Officers the responsibility for doing so. Since then we have been getting to grips with the problem.

Q5 Chairman: Sir David, how could you allow 27,500 records to build up in your Department with no one seeming to realise the seriousness of that? You are supposed to be in control of the Department are you not?

Sir David Normington: As you know, I am conducting an inquiry into why that happened and that will get to the facts.

Q6 Chairman: What is the identity of the senior civil servant who was suspended?

Sir David Normington: I am afraid I cannot tell you.

Q7 Chairman: You are not prepared to tell me that?

Sir David Normington: I am not prepared to tell you that.

Q8 Chairman: Why not?

Sir David Normington: It is not fair to put somebody who is suspended pending internal disciplinary action into the public domain. That would lead to the kind of fire storm forming around that person that we have seen before and I do not think that that would be fair.

Q9 Chairman: ASBOs are only one of nine different interventions that have been introduced in the last few years. Is the system not becoming too complicated to administer effectively?

Sir David Normington: I do not think so because we have tried to develop those solutions in consultation with local people, people in the police and local authorities who are using those powers. We have specifically developed those responses according to the problems that people are having in their communities. Yes, we have to train people so that they understand what the best interventions are in a particular circumstance, but I think that it is right that we should respond to need and we should have the solutions in place to respond to those needs. We will go on doing that where we think that something needs doing locally.

Q10 Chairman: I referred to nine, but what are the other eight different interventions?

Sir David Normington: I think you will find that they are in the annex to the Report. Appendix three lists them: acceptable behaviour contracts, anti-social behaviour orders, crack house closure orders etc. The only one not covered there is the written warning, which is often the first step in action against an individual who is committing anti-social behaviour.

Q11 Chairman: Paragraph 2.7, page 20, discusses the effectiveness of anti-social behaviour interventions. It makes the obvious point that they were influenced by factors such as age, previous criminality and use of support services. Baroness Scotland answered a question on 28 November in the House of Lords to Lord Lester of Herne Hill and the answer suggests that there was an internal inquiry happening on about a qualitative assessment of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. Is that internal inquiry happening and when can we expect it to be published?

Sir David Normington: I am afraid I do not know about that.

Ms Casey: I do not know specifically about the correspondence you have just referred to.

Q12 Chairman: So there is no internal inquiry?

Ms Casey: As the NAO Report says, the Home Office produced a report on Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in 2002 and we have quite clearly said on a number of occasions that when the numbers get to this stage, it is right for us to look at the effectiveness of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders again and that we are keen to do so.

Q13 Chairman: If you look at paragraphs 2.7 to 2.13, as I said, it states that, as you might expect, the effect of intervention on antisocial behaviour is influenced by factors such as age, previous criminality and use of support services. So, why do you not collect that data?

Ms Casey: Is it paragraph 2.7 on page 20?

Q14 Chairman: Yes. It goes on. If you read through the paragraphs, which I am sure you have, because you have agreed the Report, one would think that it was basic information on which you apparently do not collect the data. Why?

Ms Casey: First, as the NAO Report shows, we are clear that anti-social behaviour can be tackled. Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, as you rightly pointed out in your first question to Sir David, are one of many tools in the kit. We have tried to change the culture to ensure that people take action to tackle anti-social behaviour and the Report evidences that. I was pleased by some of the findings in the Report, because they back up our strategy, whereby it is right that we try to nip problems in the bud with warning letters and get across to people a message that they should not behave badly, escalating to acceptable behaviour contracts and to all other interventions. You then end up with a small number of people on Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.
Sir David Normington KCB and Louise Casey

Over the past three years, from when I started at the Home Office in 2003 and during the period of the anti-social behaviour unit, which the Report broadly covers, we have been clear that we wanted to spend our energy, money and time on getting local areas to use the available tools and the new tools that are on track, and to take action to tackle anti-social behaviour—

**Chairman**: Okay. Thank you very much

**Ms Casey**: —rather than actually delve into lots of lots of research information.

**Q15 Chairman**: We have to have short answers in this Committee. Thank you. Sir David, do you think it important that you bring the public into your confidence? Do you think that the public should know what is going on with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders?

**Sir David Normington**: There should be a lot of discussion locally.

**Q16 Chairman**: Would you look at paragraph 1.17, which you can find on page 16? It tells us that the majority of people to whom the NAO spoke in its six focus groups were completely unaware of their local area’s strategy: who to go to, what was going on.

**Sir David Normington**: We accept that finding; we accept the finding that it needs to improve. When we published the Respect Action Plan a year ago, we said that we would expect every local partnership to hold a face-the-people session in which they fed back to people what was happening. There is a gap whereby in some areas people think that there is a problem but they know neither what is happening to tackle it nor what is available. We accept that and we are tackling it.

**Q17 Chairman**: Will you lastly look please at paragraph 2.12 on page 21? That tells us that 55% of people the NAO sampled breached the conditions of their anti-social behaviour order, and that 35% of them did so on five or more occasions. How are you going to tackle the behaviour of that hard core?

**Sir David Normington**: It is really important that breaches are enforced. We have never measured the success of ASBOs by measuring the number of breaches, because when you are on an ASBO you are supervised and monitored. Frankly, if you step out of line, the breach is enforced. We would expect therefore the number of enforced breaches to be high, because it is a measure of how the community is being protected. If there were no enforcement of breaches, local communities would have no confidence that ASBOs were working. That is why we are not at all defensive about the figures. By the way of course, they focus, as the paragraph suggests, on a very tough group of people—the most challenging people.

**Q18 Mr Khan**: In answer to the Chairman’s question about the suspended member of staff, you refused to name them. Is that because suspension is an administrative rather than disciplinary act?

**Sir David Normington**: It is an administrative act pending a disciplinary inquiry, therefore this person is not guilty until we have looked at the facts.

**Q19 Mr Khan**: Do you believe that your officials are giving Ministers all the information they need?

**Sir David Normington**: I think that in this case Ministers were not told what was happening. I have seen no evidence that that team of Ministers were informed, so I guess the answer is that in this case—

**Q20 Mr Khan**: So, you are unhappy?

**Sir David Normington**: In this case, Ministers were not told. Obviously, the inquiry will get the facts, but I have seen nothing to suggest that they were told.

**Q21 Mr Khan**: Your officials failed to give Ministers the information that they needed to have and should have had?

**Sir David Normington**: Well, I am carrying out an inquiry into that, but it appears so, yes.

**Q22 Mr Khan**: In general terms, are you happy with the service provided by your officials to our Ministers?

**Sir David Normington**: In this case, I think we have fallen short.

**Q23 Mr Khan**: You said that one of your members of staff had been suspended, pending the investigation. Are any other members of your staff being investigated for potential disciplinary breaches?

**Sir David Normington**: Not at this moment, because—

**Q24 Mr Khan**: Do you expect that to change?

**Sir David Normington**: I think it depends what the inquiry throws up. In the specific case, information was available to us which justified, we thought, a suspension. We have no other information of that sort at the moment and therefore we will let the inquiry proceed.

**Q25 Mr Khan**: How soon do you expect the inquiry to conclude?

**Sir David Normington**: The Home Secretary said in the House that it might take up to six weeks, but we are pressing on as fast as we can.

**Q26 Mr Khan**: You expect to meet that?

**Sir David Normington**: I intend to meet that, yes.

**Q27 Mr Khan**: How do you respond to questions raised by constituents of mine, and by me to you now, about how we can have confidence in the Home Office’s ability to tackle anti-social behaviour when there appears to be a crisis a week in relation to the Home Office?

**Sir David Normington**: I do understand the damage that is being done to the Home Office by some of the present circumstances. I do want to say one thing, if you will allow me, which is to repeat that this is a problem that was being tackled from May. It was being tackled from May and has been tackled in the
course of this year, so although, as I quite understand, the story is being written as: “Home Office is a problem now,” this is a historic problem that is being tackled. It is very important to say that, I understand that we have to build people’s confidence, but I would just say that in the case of anti-social behaviour action, the action is very much taken locally. The Home Office provides the tools and the framework, but the action is taken by the police, by local authorities, by housing authorities and sometimes by the community, so you can have confidence in those people.

Q28 Mr Khan: My final point on this is that you said people’s confidence needs to be established. Do you accept that your officials need to get the confidence of our Ministers in their ability to do their job?

Sir David Normington: I believe that I have a job to establish both ministerial confidence in the Home Office and public confidence in the Home Office. That is what I am trying to do.

Q29 Mr Khan: You alluded to the work that goes on locally. We have read in the Report, Ms Casey, that we have a Government who spend £3.4 billion a year on anti-social behaviour. In addition, money is spent indirectly by the safer communities initiative, neighbourhood renewal and all the rest of it. Sorry, I beg your pardon: the cost of anti-social behaviour is £3.4 billion. The annual budget is £25 million, plus the indirect costs. The Report gives us a list of all the laws passed since 1997. We know there is additional funding, and it appears that the tools have been given to local authorities to tackle anti-social behaviour. What do you do when you have, for example, a liberal, with a small l, local authority—perhaps with a capital L as well, I say looking over to my colleagues—a fluffy sort of authority that does not want to use the tools that we are giving them, the weapons that locals want them to use? How can you centrally get them to take action?

MS Casey: The first thing to say is that obviously we operate across the country, regardless of who is in power, and that what we have done over the last three years—

Q30 Mr Khan: But is not one consequence of localism that there will be a postcode lottery, whereby you have some excellent Labour authorities taking action—dare I say it, there may be one or two Tory ones as well—and there will be a number of local authorities that, for political reasons, are unwilling to use the tools you have given them?

MS Casey: I do not think that is the case, to be honest with you. The clear thing for us from 2003 onwards was to make sure—I did something like 70 visits in my first three or four months in the job and that ranged over all sorts of areas. What was clear to me, which was obviously clear to a huge number of politicians of all sorts of political persuasions, at ward level and to Members of Parliament from their postbags, was that there was a sense of inaction in tackling anti-social behaviour, and that what occurred was that the police were off tackling crime, local authorities were worrying about environmental things, and housing was worrying about collecting rent and doing repairs. What we needed to do was to—

Q31 Mr Khan: How do you explain the variations, then?

MS Casey: If you will allow me, what we have done is create a structure and an infrastructure that I would argue is still pretty much in its infancy, given that local authorities and the crime and disorder reduction partnerships have had the anti-social behaviour co-ordinators for only a small number of years. We have created an infrastructure that means that people are able to tackle anti-social behaviour, and we do surveys each year to see what tools and powers are being used and we follow that up using what I suppose you could call campaigning techniques, which they talk about in the Report, around things such as Academies. We have had more than 10,000 people come—

Mr Khan: We have a 10-minute time limit to get all our questions in, so answers must be kept short.

MS Casey: In which case, what we are interested in is what the public have to say about local performance and anti-social behaviour, and through the local area agreement framework that, as Members might be aware, is being introduced across the country from April 2007, every local authority will have to agree—

Q32 Mr Khan: What do you do when a constituent who lives in one area sees no improvement to his quality of life yet suffers similar anti-social behaviour to his cousin who lives in another area but has an excellent local authority and local police who take action to improve the quality of her life?

Sir David Normington: We have put in place in every area about 375 anti-social behaviour co-ordinators who are our contacts with those areas. We can provide them with comparative data across the country about what interventions are being used and why, and we use them to analyse—

Q33 Mr Khan: But what can he do?

Sir David Normington: In the end, this is a locally based programme. We can show the data and comparisons—

Q34 Mr Khan: So it is a postcode lottery?

Sir David Normington: No. We can go in there and say, “You really need to use these interventions and you are not doing so.” Remember, this is not merely local authorities, but the police—

Q35 Mr Khan: I have a short time, and I have to move on. On page 28, figure 14 gives examples of cost-effective preventive interventions from Europe and the United States. The first is early childhood intervention. I am aware from the social exclusion debate last Thursday, that Ministers have been to Denver to see some of the early intervention projects there. Could this pejoratively be characterised as foetal ASBOs?
Ms Casey: No. We have to be clear—

Q36 Mr Khan: If I were to call foetal ASBOs ludicrous, would that be outrageous bearing in mind what the evidence suggests?

Ms Casey: It is unhelpful to use soundbites used by the media of that kind—

Q37 Mr Khan: I think that that phrase was used by the leader of Her Majesty’s Government’s official Opposition.

Ms Casey: Whoever it was used by, I do not think that it is helpful.

Mr Khan: I agree.

Ms Casey: What we are talking about is when it comes to parenting and the debate about trying to help struggling parents who bring children into this world, building on the work of Sure Start and those other things, we were clear and announced last year that we want to ensure that those parents who are struggling or unwilling to take help—let me put that in there, too—take help in order to bring up children.

Q38 Mr Khan: Clearly there is not only a moral case for doing that, but you are saying that there are cost savings through doing that at an early stage?

Ms Casey: That is in another report—in the Respect Action Plan—but we are absolutely clear that money spent on parenting classes that are structured, effective and the rest of it pays off in huge dividends, including financially.

Q39 Chairman: Just following on from Mr Khan’s questions—it is important that we clear this up—you told him that Ministers were not informed early enough. Remind us when they were informed of the problem with criminal records? On what date?

Sir David Normington: I have no evidence that they were informed about the backlog before last Tuesday.

Chairman: Can you tell us—

Sir David Normington: I need to say to you that of course I am carrying out an inquiry, which will establish the facts.

Q40 Chairman: That is your information at the moment.

Sir David Normington: That is my information at the moment.

Q41 Chairman: How far up the administration stream did this information rise? As a senior manager of this organisation, presumably you were not aware of it before last Tuesday?

Sir David Normington: I was not aware of it.

Q42 Chairman: Who was? How far up the administrative stream did it go? This is quite a big problem and you are telling us that you run an organisation where apparently people were not aware of this.

Sir David Normington: Yes, I am aware that it is a big problem. I could not be more aware of that.

Q43 Chairman: So, who was aware of it? How senior were they? If you do not want to give us names, give us grades.

Sir David Normington: No. I am sorry, but I have agreed with the Home Secretary, who has asked me to carry out a full inquiry. Anything I say now is like hanging, drawing and quartering that person or the other people—

Q44 Chairman: I have not asked for names. This is your one opportunity, appearing before a Parliamentary Committee, to defend your reputation and that of the senior managers of your Department. I am not asking for names, which you refuse to give me. I want to know how high up the organisation the information went. Was it just at the clerks’ level or what? Was it lying around in boxes with nobody knowing about it at all?

Sir David Normington: No, it appears to have been known by a senior civil servant, who is currently suspended.

Q45 Chairman: How senior?

Sir David Normington: I am really sorry but I need, partly because I do not yet know all the facts, to carry out the inquiry to get to that—

Q46 Chairman: You do not know all the facts despite the fact that you run the Department? You do not know all the facts and, despite the fact that it has been at the top of the news for the last week, you do not know what is going on?

Sir David Normington: Well, Mr Leigh, I think that is very unfair. I have told you that I am carrying out an inquiry. I do know what is going on in my—

Q47 Chairman: So you do know what is going on.

Sir David Normington: I do know what is going on in my Department.

Q48 Chairman: But you are not prepared to give us any information about how far the information percolated upwards.

Sir David Normington: I have said that it certainly was in the hands of a senior civil servant. I am not prepared to go any further.

Chairman: Thank you.

Q49 Mr Touhig: Why does not the Home Office fully evaluate the success or otherwise of its various interventions?

Sir David Normington: We do, but let me start by saying that I accept that more should be done. We have not done enough evaluation, but some of the interventions are very new. Only 10,000 ASBOs have been issued, but we have done an evaluation of them.

Q50 Mr Touhig: You are doing some evaluation.

Sir David Normington: We are doing more evaluation, and we need to do more.

Q51 Mr Touhig: Appendix 3 on pages 39 to 40, which you referred to a moment ago, lists the interventions. Which are the most effective?
**Ms Casey:** May I jump in on this question? What is really heartening about the NAO Report, which looked at the case files for a sample of all the cases, is the statement that 93% of the anti-social behaviour halted after three interventions, and 65% after warning letters and no further action. That is what we know has been happening out there, and it has been backed up by the NAO Report. The four stages are dealt with in figure 4 near the beginning of the Report. It clearly shows that 65% of people desisted after one intervention, 85% after two and, what is to me somewhat staggering, 93% after three.

**Q52 Mr Touhig:** You do not need to convince me about ASBOs, because I am a convert. I just wish that the police in my part of the world were.

**Ms Casey:** This is not just about ASBOs.

**Q53 Mr Touhig:** The Report refers on page 5 to the: “absence of formal evaluation by the Home Office of the success of different interventions”. Clearly, that has an impact on what you are doing. What the hell is the point of introducing a system and then not measuring how effective it is?

**Sir David Normington:** There are three answers to that. First, we are doing more evaluation—we accept the recommendation. Secondly, we have done some evaluation of anti-social behaviour contracts.

**Q54 Mr Touhig:** Will you be publishing some information on them?

**Sir David Normington:** We will do that. All that I would say is that we have tried to get the process going, to use the expertise and experience of local people and to spread best practice. We tried to build on local best practice first. We thought that that was the better thing to do, before having formal evaluations.

**Q55 Mr Touhig:** I and the others who are sitting around this table represent various communities across the country. When we say in our own communities that the powers that the authorities now have should be used, there is sometimes a reluctance to do so. In the absence of evidence that only you can produce after proper evaluation, how can we say that this works, or that that does not work as well?

**Sir David Normington:** I think you can say that we have plenty of evidence that warning letters, anti-social behaviour contracts, crack house closures and dispersal orders work. Obviously, you must relate what you do to the situation in which you find yourself.

**Q56 Mr Touhig:** But do you accept the point in the Report that says that there is an absence of formal evaluation of what you do?

**Sir David Normington:** It is a fact that we need to do more evaluation, yes.

**Q57 Mr Touhig:** Why are the police reluctant to use ASBOs as a first intervention?

**Ms Casey:** May I jump in on this question? What is really heartening about the NAO Report, which looked at the case files for a sample of all the cases, is the statement that 93% of the anti-social behaviour halted after three interventions, and 65% after warning letters and no further action. That is what we know has been happening out there, and it has been backed up by the NAO Report. The four stages are dealt with in figure 4 near the beginning of the Report. It clearly shows that 65% of people desisted after one intervention, 85% after two and, what is to me somewhat staggering, 93% after three.

**Q58 Mr Touhig:** So you are not discouraged, then, by the police being reluctant to use ASBOs early on?

**Sir David Normington:** The number of ASBOs being used is going up. I do not think that the police are reluctant to use them.

**Ms Casey:** The first thing to say is that we have done formal evaluations. For example, we did a formal evaluation of acceptable behaviour contracts in 2004, and we did a formal evaluation of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in 2002.

**Q59 Mr Touhig:** Did you keep the information to yourself or did you share it with the NAO? The Report clearly states that you do not do evaluations.

**Ms Casey:** The Report rightly points out that we need to do evaluations. For example, we did a formal evaluation of acceptable behaviour contracts in 2004, and we did a formal evaluation of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in 2002.

**Q60 Mr Touhig:** Forgive me, Ms Casey, but we have a limited amount of time to ask questions and get answers. If someone is charged with an offence that requires a court appearance, how long does it take to bring them to court? Do you have any figures?

**Ms Casey:** No, I do not have figures on anti-social behaviour orders with me, because they would be the ones that are relevant to this particular—

**Q61 Mr Touhig:** No, I am talking about a whole range of cases. I have chaired about half a dozen public meetings on anti-social behaviour in my constituency in the past couple of years. The community’s concern is that there is not a proper or rapid enough response from the authorities, such as the police. When someone is prosecuted, it seems to take a considerable time to bring them before the courts. If you were sent to the headmaster for misbehaving in school, and he said, “Come back in six months and I’ll give you detention,” that would hardly be a deterrent, would it?

**Ms Casey:** The first thing to say is that people are over-obsessed with courts, if you do not mind me saying so. Most of the interventions on anti-social behaviour are things such as getting the schools to be more effective around discipline, getting housing officers to visit with a warning letter and getting community safety officers and police officers to sit down with ABCs (acceptable behaviour contracts)—none of those has anything to do with...
Sir David Normington KCB and Louise Casey

court. What you are right to point out—I think that Sir David mentioned this earlier—is that there is an issue around communications. One way to level up people’s effectiveness around anti-social behaviour, particularly in relation to what Mr Khan asked about, is to hold face-the-people sessions. The reason why we are putting face-the-people sessions on a statutory footing is that we want people to be accountable to the public and to be able to explain to you, as opposed to via me, what is happening in their local areas.

Q62 Mr Touhig: I will come on to that in a moment. I am sure that you will have something else to say when I ask you some questions in a moment. When I started as a young trainee reporter on a local paper in Wales in 1968, people who committed offences went before the courts in 10 days or so. In those days, we did not have the Crown Prosecution Service—police officers prosecuted. I appreciate that we now have the Crown Prosecution Service, but why do we not have an effective system such as that? I have cases in which people come to me and say that they have a problem in their area, the police intervene, but it takes months before the case gets to court. Would it not be more effective if we had a system whereby the police officers who were actually taking the case forward could quickly bring people into the court?

Sir David Normington: I would have to give you a note on the exact figures, but we have a whole programme to speed up justice of all sorts. In this case—I think that ASBOs involve civil cases—cases can be brought quite quickly. I have not got the figures on the speed, but I do not think it is as slow as you are implying. I can try to give you those figures.

Q63 Mr Touhig: Not everything requires one of your interventions. If somebody is charged with an act of vandalism, that matter could be brought before the courts. Indeed, the more rapidly that that is done, the more effective it is.

Sir David Normington: Yes, it is. When you talk about anti-social behaviour, though, sometimes prosecuting someone for vandalism does not actually deal with the anti-social behaviour—

Q64 Mr Touhig: I appreciate that. What I am talking about is what I call the quality of life crimes: intimidation, petty vandalism, causing neighbourhood nuisance and so forth. That is perhaps an excessive use of the word “crime”, but such things certainly cause grief in the community. What polling have you done to find out what people think of the crime and disorder reduction partnerships?

Sir David Normington: We are doing an evaluation of the crime and disorder reduction partnerships. In a few weeks’ time—I think that it will probably be in the spring—we will produce the evidence of how they are performing and we will be able to provide you with it.3 We have not done that yet, but we are doing it.

Q65 Mr Touhig: It would be useful if a note could come to the Committee about that. If I walked down the high street of Blackwood, a large town in my constituency, tomorrow and asked people what a crime and disorder reduction partnership was, most of them would not know.

Sir David Normington: I think that that is fair. They would know, though, about some of the people who were on that partnership.

Q66 Mr Touhig: No. How do we overcome that, though? People can find their MP and their councillor, but if you ask who is on your local crime and disorder reduction partnership, nobody would know.

Sir David Normington: They do, I think.

Q67 Mr Touhig: I do not know who is on mine, and I am pretty active.

Ms Casey: As a local Member, it would be shame if they did not contact you and made sure that you knew what was going on. Anyway, the point of the face-the-people sessions and of a number of the things in the respect action plan is that we have spent three years trying to get local areas to use the tools and the powers and to get a sense that they can do the job, and we have trained 10,000 people to do that. We are now pushing local areas to be much more obviously accountable to the local public.

Q68 Mr Touhig: That would be effective if people knew that the partnership existed. As I say, people find their MPs and their councillors, but I bet that very few know who is on their crime and disorder reduction partnership.

Ms Casey: That is very fair and that is why a face-the-people session will become a requirement for every crime and disorder reduction partnership, and every community safety partnership in Wales will have to hold face-the-people sessions. We are issuing very clear guidance that we want them to invite the media and to be much more obvious and open so that people know who they can complain to and what the issues are and so that they can hold people locally to account.

Q69 Mr Touhig: That seems like progress. I want to move on briefly, because I have little time left. What co-operation does the Home Office seek with other Departments and agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour? I know from my own community that it is no good simply calling out the bobby—the policeman—and moving a gang of kids who are causing a nuisance from one end of the village to another, because you are just moving the problem around. You have to engage with young people and get them doing something different. What are you doing?

Sir David Normington: We keep talking about the Respect Action Plan, but it was a statement about a cross-Government approach. It was Home Office-led by Louise Casey, but it is cross-Government. It talks about what can be done by education, social services, housing authorities and so on.

3 Ev 24–25
Q70 Mr Touhig: Do you have any initiatives at the moment? Do you have any that would encourage local authorities?

Sir David Normington: We do.

Ms Casey: Perhaps I can help. In terms of straightforward tackling of anti-social behaviour in your constituency, we have issued clear guidance and there is clear practice happening locally. People have to get around the table locally—let us leave aside central Government for the moment. We expect children’s services, youth offending services—everyone—around the table, particularly on top-end decisions about, for example, ASBOs.

Q71 Mr Touhig: That is fine. Perhaps I am not making myself very clear. Do you have any initiatives whereby you say to local authorities, “Look, you have wonderful facilities, they are called schools. We spend billions of pounds on them, we lock them up at 4 o’clock in the afternoon and wonder why the kids get into trouble, wandering around the streets when they could be using the facilities in the evening”?

Sir David Normington: That takes me back to my previous responsibilities when I was Permanent Secretary at the Department for Education and Skills. We have a major programme for providing young people locally with facilities, things to do and places to go. We have put a duty on local authorities to provide that, and we have provided extra resources. We are opening up schools much longer, we are building children’s—

Q72 Mr Touhig: My time is up. I should appreciate it if you could send us a note about where those schools are being opened up—where they are located throughout the country.

Sir David Normington: I cannot speak for Wales.

Q73 Dr Pugh: Sir David, in the NAO Report there are rather colourful maps showing the distribution of anti-social behaviour throughout the country. I studied them in some depth, so imagine my disappointment when we received a subsequent note saying that elements of the maps in the Report had been revised because the Home Office told us that after publication of the Report, the best value performance indicator that was used in the figures could not be relied on. The Home Office did not bring that to the attention of the NAO. Are not you making a habit of not bringing things to people’s attention?

Sir David Normington: That was the issue I was dealing with at the beginning with the Chairman. I have apologised for that. When we saw the Report with the map, I am afraid that we did not realise that the data used was the data that had been provided for a different purpose nine months before. Also, at that time, there was a computer error. It does not change the overall map significantly. This is not about the incidence of anti-social behaviour, but the perception of it. What the data did do was show that the levels of perception of anti-social behaviour in the survey were higher, but they did not change the basic map.

Q74 Dr Pugh: May I follow up on another section of the Report—2.15—partly dealt with by Mr Touhig already? It says: “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”. Can you expand on: “does not collect complete data”?

Do you not collect data from some areas or on some interventions, or do you just collect partial data on some interventions?

Sir David Normington: We have taken a deliberate decision not to collect lots and lots of information centrally. We thought it important to give local areas the tools and to let them get on with it. We expect them to collect data, and from time to time—this is one of the things that the CDRP (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) survey will do—we survey that data. That is what we are doing, but we do not regularly soak up information on that issue.

Q75 Dr Pugh: With respect, Sir David, how do you know that individual tools are working and having the effects that you want them to have unless you collect that data?

Sir David Normington: Because we are in touch with all local areas: we bring them together, we exchange good practice and we talk about the outcomes that they are achieving locally. Look, I get criticised all the time for setting up central data systems and asking for more and more information locally. We thought that this time we would try to do something a bit different, but we will, from time to time, collect that data and play it back to local areas so that they can see the comparisons between equivalent local areas. We will do that during the next year. We do it about once a year.

Q76 Dr Pugh: May I point out a paradox that I found in the data as presented by the NAO anyway which I should like you to explain? Paragraph 2.10 says that acceptable behaviour contracts work rather poorly with under-18s, a large number of whom display anti-social behaviour again. Paragraph 2.7 says that warning letters work extraordinarily well with them. So warning letters seem to work well with that age group, but acceptable behaviour contracts do not. Do you have any idea why?

Ms Casey: The first thing to say is that the evaluation of acceptable behaviour contracts in 2004 showed that they are an effective tool for tackling anti-social behaviour in young people. Although the Report says that 61% displayed anti-social behaviour again, compared with 27% of over-18s, I would argue that as you move up the scale, as it were, you will find that people on acceptable behaviour contracts are getting more involved in the criminal
Sirs David Normington KCB and Louise Casey

world, I am not that surprised, therefore, in the same way that I am not surprised by ASBOs being breached at the top end—

Q77 Dr Pugh: If you do not mind me saying, that sounds like a back of a fag packet analysis. You have no data behind that, do you? Ms Casey: We have quite thorough data on the 2004 evaluation of acceptable behaviour contracts—it was a thorough overhaul of whether they worked. For a voluntary contract brought in by front-line police, housing and community safety officers, this tool is extremely well liked locally. People can use it to get a message across to someone. Sometimes, they can sit down with someone at an early stage in their offending career and work through the issues to find out if they will continue. We should not be singling out a particular tool, but asking, “Do local people know what action can be taken to tackle anti-social behaviour?” In endless residents’ meetings that I attend—God knows, I attend millions of them—they do not mind whether it is a warning letter, an ABC, an injunction or an ASBO. They just want the anti-social behaviour to stop, which is why the overall perception of anti-social behaviour is incredibly important if local areas are to understand and manage it. It is also incredibly important that these face the people sessions are put in place so that they are held to account locally.

Q78 Dr Pugh: Do you think that the sheer variety and novelty of some of these tools—they are invented one day and maybe discarded the next—prevent people from doing what you might call ordinary policing such as preventive action and zero tolerance simply because an ASBO is in the offing? Is that a risk? Sir David Normington: I do not think that that is a risk and I do not think that the police would accept it. These measures are not just thought up and discarded like that, but worked up in response to local and community needs. All the evidence suggests that that is what is needed locally. Anti-social behaviour is one of the local issues that most concerns people.

Q79 Dr Pugh: May I take a case from the Report itself? Liverpool City Council issued ASBOs to a gang of six young men who walked around Liverpool bus station with rottweilers—dangerous dogs—intimidating the general public, swearing at passers-by and getting on local buses with the dogs. Everyone thought that that was criminal behaviour that should have been dealt with straight away. The Report says that in March 2005 the members of the gang were given warning letters telling them not to continue with their behaviour. Unsurprisingly, that was ineffective and eventually Anti-Social Behaviour Orders were issued. There was a case for stopping those people, asking them why they had the dogs and whether they had a right to have them, and stopping them intimidating people. By waiting for an ASBO, you are allowing a lot of anti-social behaviour to occur.

Sir David Normington: It is very difficult for us to say to local people, the council or the police that they have adopted the wrong approach. We bring people together, exchange best practice and look at what other people are doing.

Q80 Dr Pugh: Local police are now collecting dangerous dogs, are they not? Sir David Normington: Indeed they are. I do not want to criticise what happened in that case because in the end action was taken in the form of an escalating set of actions. That is an example of anti-social behaviour being dealt with. I agree that action against it must be looked at alongside other sanctions. Often, people with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders already have lots of criminal convictions. That is what the Report shows and we know it to be a fact.

Q81 Dr Pugh: On a more positive side, individual support orders have proved to be very successful here, as have parallel orders in other countries, and yet only 1% of ASBOs have them attached. If an ASBO, plus other interventions, works, why are we not insisting on more? Ms Casey: We are. Essentially, we introduced individual support orders for people under the age of 18 who are under Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, and we are now running a take-up campaign through the Courts Service and the Youth Justice Board. We also gave additional funding to the Youth Justice Board to encourage it to encourage youth offending teams to use individual support orders.

I have to say, though, that when you look at the NAO Report and our evidence on Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, you must remember that there is a very small number of people on Anti-Social Behaviour Orders—in the scheme of things, it remains a very small number. If you look again at the offending history of a lot of the people on Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, individual support orders will just be another thing that we are doing with those people. We are running a take-up campaign, but we need to be pragmatic about what happens to people on Anti-Social Behaviour Orders if they continue to breach them.

Q82 Dr Pugh: My last question concerns social respect awards. I followed your advice—I spoke to my local paper and asked for some nominations. I was a little bit disappointed by the response. How many nominations are we getting nationally for social respect awards? Ms Casey: The Taking a Stand Awards? Dr Pugh: Yes. 

Ms Casey: That is my favourite bit of the whole thing. We have just launched the next round. Last year, I think that about 500 people came forward and got Taking a Stand Awards. It is a growing number of people.

Q83 Dr Pugh: How many people were there before that?
Ms Casey: There were 30 in the first year and 120 in the second year, and now there is a total of 500 nationally. I am glad that you raised them, though, because the point of the Taking a Stand Awards is incredibly powerful for us. What they do is to get a very good message out to everybody else. Instead of seeing: “Louise Casey, 41, mugged at bus stop,” you see: “Louise Casey, 41, has taken a stand against anti-social behaviour in her area,” and that we can do something.

Each Taking a Stand Award winner goes on to help in so many other different ways. We did it with the Co-op and we have done it with BBC local radio. The more partners we have the better. That is 500 solid examples of people who can make that sort of difference in the community and in their residents’ association. If we can get that message out through all the consumer magazines and everything else, I hope more people will see not that they can get an award but that they can do something to tackle anti-social behaviour and that it is possible. That is why it such an important vehicle for us.

Q84 Mr Mitchell: It sounds from the example of the Liverpool bus station and what one hears about pit bull terriers that the RSPCA would do better than anybody else to issue Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in Liverpool. However, that is not my question. Anti-social behaviour is such a vague concept. It can cover anything from yob culture and the kind of behaviour that you see on “Celebrity Big Brother” to vandalism and the kind of pranks that we used to get up to when we were all kids to neighbours from hell. Is it not too vague? Is it not really a box into which to put everything that the police cannot deal with directly because they are under-resourced and too busy dealing with targets on crime?

Sir David Normington: I do not think so. If you look at the lists—there are several, including one on page 9—it is true that there are other offences relating to some of the behaviours, but if you are talking about a group of youths hanging around and creating a nuisance, there were not powers before to deal with that situation. I would say that it is not too vague. For local communities, having kids hanging around can be threatening or a nuisance—

Q85 Mr Mitchell: But kids have always hung around. It is a habit of youth.

Sir David Normington: Yes, I know, but we are talking about people who are creating a persistent nuisance to others. We are not talking about just hanging around in the street; we are talking about persistent nuisance—intimidation, harassment and a whole list of things. People are drinking and being rowdy, creating noise and driving vehicles around. Those are well-known things. You know that.

Q86 Mr Mitchell: There is a difference between hanging around and crime, but a lot of the calls—

Ms Casey: If I can just say, the key thing is whether the behaviour is causing alarm, harassment and distress. That is the key to everything. When I set up the unit in the Home Office in 2003, we were under pressure—I will be honest. People wanted endless definitions, and this, that and the other. What I found fascinating was that if you asked local people, local police, housing organisations, the rent officer or whoever, everybody knew what anti-social behaviour was. They did not need a massive research report on it or 500 pages of strategy; everybody knew what it was. Three years later, the National Audit Office went and ran its focus groups in the midst of all that. It asked the public whether they knew what anti-social behaviour was, and they knew exactly. It was not a case of having no definition whatsoever, and there is a clear definition in the Act. We have what they call a typology in research terms, so I think that we are clear and that the public are clear. What they want is action to deal with it.

Q87 Mr Mitchell: I will stop you there. Clearly you are saying that here is a problem. Are we not thrashing around a bit too much in our efforts to deal with that? I see from the table on page 14 that there are so many funding streams—liveability funds, the single community programme, the safer and stronger communities fund, the neighbourhood renewal fund, the new deal for communities, the Home Office anti-social behaviour unit and neighbourhood wardens. That is a plethora, and how on earth can you pull all that together to have an effect on the ground?

Ms Casey: The first thing that we did was to fund a network—it states this on page 12 under paragraph 1.11—of anti-social behaviour co-ordinators, so that every community safety or crime and disorder reduction partnership had a named individual. That started to create the infrastructure. However, what we could not do, because we were not resourced and because it would not be morally right, was suddenly set up a huge industry. We needed—this is what we have done—to get housing people to tackle anti-social behaviour, to get environmental people to tackle anti-social behaviour and to get the new neighbourhood policing teams to tackle anti-social behaviour by trying to change the culture. As that paragraph runs on into training the academies, more than 10,000 people have been inspired, trained and held to account to try to do better. On it goes, with websites, action lines and all that stuff.

Q88 Mr Mitchell: The point is whether you are bringing them all together to tackle it.

Ms Casey: They are brought together locally.

Q89 Mr Mitchell: Why cannot they then tap a common funding stream?

Sir David Normington: One of the things that is happening is that there is a simplification of local authority funding so that we are all providing money to local authorities in big blocks against a number of specified outcomes against local area agreements. That will greatly simplify how central Government fund specific initiatives. There will be a safer communities block that all the money for that will go into, and the local authority will have the ability to move the money around within that block. That will help.
Q90 Mr Mitchell: I am glad to hear that. It will help. How do you explain the astonishing variations? There is a map on page 17. I looked, as I always do, first at Grimsby in north-east Lincolnshire, and Hull. The two places are very similar—ports, with a retired fishing population and a large proportion of old people. Hull is just the same as Grimsby, but without the culture, and yet the extent of reporting of anti-social behaviour is very high in Grimsby and moderately low in Hull. What on earth could account for that?

Ms Casey: That graph is about perception of anti-social behaviour. I will be honest with you; at the moment the Home Office is carrying out a piece of work to look into what drives perception of crime and anti-social behaviour. My view of the map and of the difference is that basically, if you go within that, you will find hard-pressed areas, as they are called. In other words, they are deprived wards and deprived areas. Let us take the Wirral. Somewhere like the Wirral, which I think is at the middle ranking of 77 on the list, has, frankly, some posh areas that are okay where people do not think that there is a problem, and it has Birkenhead, Borough Road and some tough areas where people think that it is a huge problem.

Q91 Mr Mitchell: So the areas that you are concerned with are kind of super-output areas, where there is a lot of poverty or a lot of old people?

Ms Casey: The perception and experience of anti-social behaviour are greater in deprived areas, definitely. However, the data in this Report is from when we asked them to put this question in the local government user satisfaction survey for the first time, so that we could have the first cut, really. We had the British crime survey, which is the Home Office’s main tool for things, and we wanted the local government survey to do the same thing. Lots of different things can affect the perception locally, but it comes back to the fact that by now, in 2007, one of the things that we must encourage all these areas to do is to be upfront with local people about what they are doing to tackle the problems and how they are tackling them. Hull and Grimsby—I know both areas well and have done a number of visits to both—need to become more effective—

Q92 Mr Mitchell: I wonder if it was the fact that you had paid more visits to Grimsby that created the situation?

Ms Casey: There is an absolutely wonderful Taking a Stand Award winner in Grimsby called Steve Hill, who is a star.

Q93 Mr Mitchell: That was a joke, but I wonder if you could supply some information on the differences between Grimsby and Hull, particularly in terms of the local response and the efforts made to deal with the issue because it puzzles me. I wondered, and perhaps you would like to comment on, whether it was anything to do with the fact that the local paper in Grimsby is constantly bashing on about yob behaviour, crime and culture. The Chairman, who lives in rural Lincolnshire, must be terrified to come near Grimsby. 5

Chairman: I try not to for many reasons.

Ms Casey: The more the public know about action to tackle anti-social behaviour, the more likely they are to trust and have confidence in the police or the local authority—it makes a huge, significant, proportionate difference, or whatever language you want to use. That is really important. What does not necessarily work with the public is just handing out flash bits of paper that say everything is perfect. People are not stupid. Where people experience anti-social behaviour, if they know that action is being taken, they have greater trust and confidence.

Q94 Mr Mitchell: It does not justify anti-social behaviour by telling people it is going on or dampen it by telling them there is a recourse.

Ms Casey: The crucial thing is that we need areas to be absolutely clear that they are taking action. You have to talk about the action that you are taking. That is what we have consistently told the police and particularly local authorities: they must keep using all of their information channels to tell people what action they are taking. Do not tell people that life is perfect; tell them about the four ASBOs that have been taken out.

Q95 Mr Mitchell: Given the information on how we are doing in north east Lincolnshire, I have to confess that although it is unfashionable in the Labour Party today, I am a bleeding-heart liberal—too bleeding-heart to be in today’s Liberal party in fact—not a retributionist. However, I wonder with that kind of background whether we are not better placing the emphasis on diversionary activity. You mentioned awards and we have a wonderful man called Steve Hill in Grimsby who is producing exactly that kind of diversionary activity: sport, social clubs, St Martin’s community action group, a climbing wall and all kinds of things that are bringing crime and anti-social behaviour down in Nunthorpe. Is that not where we should be placing the emphasis rather than on orders?

Ms Casey: We absolutely need to do both. In your particular example, which I am very familiar with, what happened is that we had to take action first on anti-social behaviour. I have come across endless examples of that all around the country. What we had to do and what we needed to do was get people to have rules, and when rules were in force, something happened. The lack of a youth club is never an excuse for picking up a stone and throwing it at somebody.

Mr Mitchell: It would be helpful if there was a youth club.

Ms Casey: What is interesting is that what we have done—as is very clear in all the rhetoric, reports and guidance we have produced—is to introduce a twin-track approach to tackling anti-social behaviour: support and enforcement. You have to do both of those. As Sir David mentioned earlier,
new money has gone into youth activities—I can chapter and verse that out if you want me to. There is an awful lot going on to try to divert people away from problems. We have a new and huge push that I think will pay dividends—not immediately but in many years to come—on parenting.

Q96 Mr Mitchell: I just have one final question before the Chairman puts the bar on me. When I did a period of service at the Humberside police station as a parliamentary attachment, I was stuck in Hull and one of the inspectors, who may actually have been a superintendent, said something that rang very true. He said that in Hull it is a war between us—the police—and about 200 problem families and because we have a free society and we cannot control them directly, they are winning. How far is anti-social behaviour that kind of problem and how far are the orders a useful weapon in dealing with those problem families?

Ms Casey: We have an incredibly coherent approach that we have put together over a period of years to deal with those sorts of problem families. From early on it became clear that in any given area, there were upwards of two or three families. The way the services were coming at those families was that there would be a police officer worrying about the dad, who was in and out of prison, there would be a social worker worrying about the mum, who potentially had depression, and there would be an educational welfare officer who had dibs on the 12-year-old, who was truanting. We established something called the neighbour nuisance panel with lots of front-line practitioners, as a way of, again, using the twin-track approach of surrounding those people with a sense that if they do not realise that they need to accept help, they will potentially face eviction and they certainly will face ABCs or ASBOs. There was a wall of enforcement surrounding them, and people got support and help. I am going back a couple of years, but I think in 80% of the cases where that approach was taken, anti-social behaviour dropped.

Now, using the Respect Action Plan that we announced this time last year, almost to the day, we want to set up 50—we are going to set up more, we are going to set up more families. The way the services were coming at those families was that there would be a police officer worrying about the dad, who was in and out of prison, there would be a social worker worrying about the mum, who potentially had depression, and there would be an educational welfare officer who had dibs on the 12-year-old, who was truanting. We established something called the neighbour nuisance panel with lots of front-line practitioners, as a way of, again, using the twin-track approach of surrounding those people with a sense that if they do not realise that they need to accept help, they will potentially face eviction and they certainly will face ABCs or ASBOs. There was a wall of enforcement surrounding them, and people got support and help. I am going back a couple of years, but I think in 80% of the cases where that approach was taken, anti-social behaviour dropped.

Q97 Annette Brooke: May I say a little more about the twin-track approach? I do applaud that, but it occurs to me that ASBOs were introduced in 1998; the Green Paper Youth Matters came along in 2005; and the very good Respect Action Plan came along in 2006. It seemed to be a one-track journey for rather a long time in terms of changing culture. Are you really confident that preventive measures came in soon enough?

Sir David Normington: There were quite a lot of other preventive measures. In my previous world, there was Sure Start and Connexions, so there were interventions, but I accept the point. This is in effect what Louise was saying. The Government took the view that they needed to put the powers in. Even if you provided some of those things, some of the young people and families would not use them, so you need to have the powers and you need to have the support. We are on to the support now. The respect action plan is a key element of that.

Q98 Annette Brooke: Eight years is a long time to formalise it, though, is it not?

Sir David Normington: Yes, but we have been slowly building up our youth activities. We have been opening up schools, although Mr Touhig did not believe it.

Mr Touhig: It is not happening in Wales.

Sir David Normington: Certainly in England it is happening. I think it is a fair comment, though, that not until 2006 in the respect action plan did we give this a coherent push.

Q99 Annette Brooke: May I follow that up? Anti-Social Behaviour Orders were introduced in 1998; individual support orders were introduced in 2004. Again, that seems an incredible time lag. Surely if you really want to change behaviour, you have to be sure there is more than just an ASBO in place.

Ms Casey: The thing to say is that it became clear when I arrived at the Home Office that there is an awful lot already going on out there. There were positive activities for young people, a huge Government programme, massive amounts of money going into drug intervention and drug treatment, and Sure Start giving support and help to parents, as well as the neighbourhood renewal programme. Obviously, as I mentioned earlier, anti-social behaviour is disproportionately weighted into deprived areas, and therefore all that money and all that assistance was in place.

We have listened over time as to whether people need more tools. The individual support order came in in the same way some of the other things have come in later in the day. Some of those are tough; you could call them tough. Some of them are seen as soft—whichever language you want to use. Each time we made refinements, I did not feel that there was a lack of support. I think what there was a lack of was the enforcement needed—the sense that if you break rules there are consequences. Certainly, that is what the residents were saying: they felt people got away with things, etc, etc.

The other thing to say is that one of the reasons why we were interested in individual support orders was that, in case conferencing around the tough end of ASBOs, we began to recognise that we needed to make sure we did everything humanly possible with young people. Perhaps they had not been caught by a youth intervention programme. The Youth Justice Board started very early on. It has a huge amount of investment in trying to divert all of those young people—
Q100 Annette Brooke: May I interrupt because I have quite a lot of questions? What proportion of ASBOs given do you think have some degree of support attached to them?

Ms Casey: Most Anti-Social Behaviour Orders for young people are done within the system, where there is a structure of youth intervention, youth offending teams and so on in place. For all those who go into court for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, there is an infrastructure and support mechanism in place. I would agree, though, that we are concerned to make sure that the take-up of individual support orders increases.

Q101 Annette Brooke: I am not convinced that when ASBOs were introduced it was expected that they would be targeted at such a high proportion of young people under 18. Lots of other categories of anti-social behaviour, which I would certainly like tackled, involve older age groups, so why has there not been enough focus on them?

Ms Casey: All we have focused on is the need to tackle anti-social behaviour, and it does not matter whether the person is 15 or 50. There are more Anti-Social Behaviour Orders on adults than children. However, this is about a proportionate response in any area. Our strategy is very clear: you need to take action to tackle the problem.

Q102 Annette Brooke: There have been accounts that ASBOs have been put on very vulnerable young people in some cases. I am not being a soft Liberal, but putting an ASBO on somebody with Asperger’s is pretty shocking in today’s society. The name-and-shame aspect compounds the issue if the person is very vulnerable, but as far as I can establish, the Home Office gives no guidance on when local authorities or local police authorities should get into naming and shaming very vulnerable young people. There have been suicides as a consequence of ASBOs in such cases.

Ms Casey: Let me be absolutely clear that in the four years that I have worked at the Home Office, we have, on consistent occasions, asked the charities that say these things to give us the cases. I would not want the first line in dealing with a person’s behaviour, where they had, say, Asperger’s Syndrome, to be an Anti-Social Behaviour Order. Those charities have never been able to provide us with those cases, and I am delighted to be able to say that. Perhaps you could go back and ask them to give me the cases, because I have written to them and done all kinds of things.

That is the first issue. Second up is what you call naming and shaming, but I would not use that expression myself, because I think that it is about accountability in the community. We asked Ministers to lift the reporting restrictions on Anti-social Behaviour Orders for minors. The presumption is that they are named, but if someone is vulnerable, we are very clear in the guidance that we issued on publicity—I read it and did bits of it myself—that a view should be taken on whether that person’s details should be reported. It is helpful to be able to say that at the PAC, because that message will hopefully go back out there.

Q103 Annette Brooke: I think that that would be really good for local forces, because I have not necessarily found that to be the case. Let me move on to acceptable behaviour contracts, which I should point out were pioneered in Liberal Democrat-controlled Islington. To be fair-minded, however, there is some excellent reporting on Hackney in our report, so that will balance things up. It is interesting that Hackney gives a certificate when a young person completes an acceptable behaviour contract. I know that you are spreading best practice, but do you give certificates to Hackney and others who appear from the statistics before us to have a good approach to anti-social behaviour?

Ms Casey: At the last set of academies as we called them, about 3,000 people attended, and we gave them all a very clear message: if people play by the rules, they should be congratulated at the end of the time that they have played by the rules. Leicester—another authority that I believe you are aware of—did something that we have promoted as best practice: it used our website and action line. A young person got an anti-social behaviour order, which is much tougher than an ABC. He had exhausted the system must therefore be different when dealing with such victims. That is why we went for special measures in the court, so that people retain greater anonymity.

Secondly, the office of the victims commissioner, which Baroness of Scotland and others set up, takes anti-social behaviour victims into account in its strategy. It will be doing stuff on that.

Although Victim Support provides support to victims of anti-social behaviour once they hit court, we had to take and we have taken a different
Sir David Normington KCB and Louise Casey

approach to dealing with such victims. Returning to something that Dr. Pugh mentioned, we are encouraging local areas to get their taking a stand award winners to provide support. At Petals in Plymouth, for example, two award winners are on the end of the telephone line. A different approach is needed, and it is about community development rather than the funding of a single national organisation. Although we have done things to assist such victims in the court—

Chairman: Ms Casey. We must try to keep our answers short.

Ms Casey: I could talk for Britain on it; I apologise. We are taking a different approach for such victims, but it is better.

Chairman: Right. We have got the point. Thank you.

Q105 Helen Goodman: Sir David, the Report shows that the majority of people do not re-engage after an intervention, and that the level of anti-social behaviour has fallen in recent years. Presumably, you regard it is a successful policy?

Sir David Normington: I do, and thank you for saying so. It is a positive Report.

Q106 Helen Goodman: I was particularly interested in figure 18. Part of my constituency includes Wear Valley, and I compared the situation there with the situation in Easington. In Easington there is a much higher perception of the level of anti-social behaviour, but incidents of related crime are higher in my constituency. You know that the two areas are near to each other. Do you know specifically why there might be a difference between the two?

Sir David Normington: I do not. I shall ask Louise Casey if she does. We are back to the problem of what the survey is measuring. This is a local government survey.

Helen Goodman: I understand all that.

Sir David Normington: You know all that.

Q107 Helen Goodman: If you know anything specific, tell me; if you do not, I shall ask some other questions.

Sir David Normington: We do not know that. Indeed, the best performing area is Wolverhampton, which is counter-intuitive, so there is a lot to dig out of the survey.

Q108 Helen Goodman: One thing that people complain about is that when they ring the police, they do not get a speedy response. Indeed, on page 16 there is a quotation from somebody in Wear Valley, and that was precisely her experience. Unfortunately, owing to the way in which the Home Office police funding formula works, the number of police officers in County Durham will be cut over the next few years. How will that help with police responsiveness?

Sir David Normington: I do not know the figures for County Durham: I do know that we are providing more resources next year for police forces. There will be a 3.6% increase in real terms, and we will also provide extra resources for neighbourhood policing to ensure that there is a neighbourhood team in every area by May 2008. We are putting more resources into front-line policing, which is specifically in support of the initiatives under discussion. We face a lot of criticism about cuts and so on. There was some in a Sunday paper. Next year there will be an increase, and it should enable us to continue putting police and community support officers on the front line.

Q109 Helen Goodman: That is not the situation in County Durham. I think that I had better write separately with my specific questions, and I would be grateful for an answer to them. Ms Casey, there is an interesting quote on page 20 from somebody who works with young people:

“When they agree . . . an Acceptable Behaviour Contract with the kids they do not have a conversation with them about how they are going to achieve it.”

If there is no conversation, it is not really a contract, is it?

Ms Casey: As the guidance and evaluation have shown, it is important to sit down and have a conversation, and to make sure, particularly when young people are involved, that the parents are aware of and understand why the accepted behaviour agreement, as they are called in the north-east, or contract is being put in place. In addition, warning letters quite often do not just arrive in the post. Somebody knocks on the door and has a conversation with the person.

Q110 Helen Goodman: Are you saying that henceforth that will always happen, and that there will not be a letter or official contact, particularly with young people, without some support in place alongside it?

Ms Casey: I cannot guarantee that every single ABC, which is a voluntary agreement made between either a local authority or the police and the individual, will keep that youth worker happy. I can say that we are very clear that workers need to sit down with people. We say that in the guidance and we promote it as good practice. I think that one reason why the contracts are successful is because, on the whole, the industry does that with people.

Q111 Helen Goodman: Have you changed the guidance since the contracts were originally set up?

Ms Casey: No, we have not. The 2004 evaluation is very clear, and we have produced a step-by-step guide on how to use the powers. It is new—I believe that it was produced in 2005 or 2006. We have endless calls on our action line. We must make it clear that people should agree the contracts where possible, but I am not going to change something on the back of one quote from one worker.

Q112 Helen Goodman: In figure 3 on page 11, you can see that the figures for people aged 18 and under are not any further disaggregated. There is clearly a significant difference between someone who is 17 and someone who is 12, and the age of criminal
responsibility is 14. Do you collect data that are further disaggregated by age for that younger age group?

Ms Casey: No, we do not. I think that the figure is for ASBOs. We do not collect such data for ASBOs. We collect data for groups aged 18 and under, and for adults. The courts record whether the case goes through the youth court or the adult court.

Q113 Helen Goodman: In view of the fact that the powers, solutions and penalties are different depending on whether someone is over or under the age of 14, do you not think that it would be a good idea to start disaggregating?

Sir David Normington: I think that there is a case for doing that. We are doing more evaluation, as I said, and we should look at that in a bit more detail. I believe that anti-social behaviour intervention is possible from 10 upwards, in fact. Yes, we have a 10 to 17-year-old group.

Q114 Helen Goodman: What I am saying is that a 10-year-old is not the same as a 17-year-old. I hope that you agree with that.

Sir David Normington: They certainly are not. We need to understand that there is a complete difference between children and people who are very near adulthood, and that the interventions need to be completely different as well.

Q115 Helen Goodman: Good.

I would like to ask a question about eviction as the final penalty for some groups of people. Do you not think that there is an unfairness in having a penalty that applies to people in social housing but not to people who are owner-occupiers or private tenants?

Ms Casey: The first thing to say is that eviction should be avoided at all costs, and we are very clear, now that we have such a coherent set of tools, that it should not be necessary to reach a stage at which a family must be evicted. One reason why we have a wide set of tools is so that we can use tools according to the tenure the person is in. Certainly before ASBOs, there were only possession proceedings to deal with anti-social behaviour by people in the social housing sector. The Government have introduced a raft of tools, which means that it does not matter where you live, we can tackle that anti-social behaviour. One of the reasons, though, why I am very keen on something called the house closure power, which we are consulting on at the moment, is that that will be a quite radical tool that can be used by police and local authorities, depending on who wants what once the consultation has finished, which will be able to be used even in the private rented or owner-occupier sectors, or with social housing tenancies.

Q116 Helen Goodman: I am interested in this because on Saturday afternoon I was in an area of my constituency where people were complaining that, whereas if housing was owned by the local authority there would be some management of the tenants, what was increasingly happening was that private landlords were renting properties out to families with extreme and complex problems and they were creating problems for the whole neighbourhood—for everybody else—apparently uncontrolled.

Ms Casey: The main thing is that we do not want people moved and the problem moved, so our strategy has been to make sure that no matter where people are living you can tackle that anti-social behaviour. The family intervention projects that I mentioned earlier are not about people living in any particular tenure; they are non-tenure-specific. Things like Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and dispersal orders go to the geography—wherever people live.

Sir David Normington: The answer is, in this case, that if there is a serious problem of anti-social behaviour, we need to get the local people together, we need to get the anti-social behaviour co-ordinator involved, and we need to get the police and local people together. That is how it should work, and we should try it and insist that it works, so that if it is a big problem locally it is dealt with. The fact that it is a private landlord is neither here nor there.

Q117 Mr Davidson: Am I right in thinking, Sir David, that there is a clear correlation in terms of areas between anti-social behaviour, the measurement of anti-social behaviour and degradation and poverty and misery in general?

Sir David Normington: Yes, in broad terms, but it is a bit more complicated than that.

Q118 Mr Davidson: Yes, of course it is. Can I just clarify whether or not, when you are comparing areas and the scale of anti-social behaviour, you are actually comparing like with like? I, like Austin, did the police scheme, which was wonderful—it confirmed a number of my prejudices. One in particular was that the police responded far more quickly to middle-class areas and took action on what were considered acts of anti-social behaviour in those areas more quickly than they did in working-class areas. Many people in working-class areas did not complain about activities about which there would be complaints in middle-class areas. In those circumstances you can see how there is, clearly, under-reporting of bad behaviour. Do your statistics take account of that fully?

Sir David Normington: I do not think they can take account of that fully, but I think we do acknowledge that issue. I really do think that neighbourhood policing is a key solution to this, because it means local people know who—

Q119 Mr Davidson: We will not go into that. I do not believe any of that, I must confess. Can I just clarify: is there a correlation in your view, from the evidence, between those who are involved in anti-social behaviour and illiteracy and innumeracy?

Sir David Normington: I am afraid I do not know whether there is evidence. I think it is very likely because, of course—

Q120 Mr Davidson: You say you do not know, and Ms Casey is nodding her head.
Ms Casey: I am agreeing that I think it is likely.

Q121 Mr Davidson: It is likely, but you do not actually know.

Sir David Normington: There may be some evidence of that, but I do not know.

Q122 Mr Davidson: Okay. I am looking at paragraph 5b of the executive summary, which states that: “many individuals are responsible for relatively minor incidents . . . Some 65% of our sample received only one intervention.”

Sir David Normington: Could you just point me to the paragraph?

Q123 Mr Davidson: On paragraph 5b on page 5, the idea is that there is one intervention, then success and so on. To what extent were those basically nice kids who just needed the equivalent of a superintendent’s warning, or supportive parents, so that if their parents were called in to the head teacher, that would have sobered them up and the problem would have been sorted? Would that have been resolved by some mechanism anyway? Is 65% a misleading statistic, because it implies a success for the process when it would have been resolved anyway?

Sir David Normington: I do not think that we are talking about nice kids. There may be some in there, but I do not think that. Interventions are used because there is a problem locally that needs dealing with.

Q124 Mr Davidson: Can you substantiate that by telling me about the 65% by area and social class?

Ms Casey: It is the NAO’s figure. I do not know whether—

Sir David Normington: It is the NAO’s soundbite.

Ms Murphie: It is drawn from the areas that we visited—from a mixture of deprived and not-so-deprived areas. We could probably break that down for you.

Q125 Mr Davidson: Do you understand the point that I am making?

Ms Murphie: Yes, but—

Q126 Mr Davidson: If it were shown that 90% of the kids from two-parent families where both parents were professionals had their problems resolved by the first intervention, that would tell me something slightly different from what I would see from a random cross-section.

Ms Murphie: I do not think that we have the evidence locally to be able to say on that point.

Q127 Mr Davidson: I have some other questions that I want to ask. Could I clarify something? Point 5c of the executive summary says that: “20% of our sample received 55% of all interventions”. It goes on to say: “This group also had an average of 50 criminal convictions.” That seems to be an indication of failure in the system, does it not? If someone amasses 50 criminal convictions, they are working at it reasonably hard. To what extent is such a mechanism already doomed to fail? Is incarceration the solution that ought to be sought for such people?

Sir David Normington: I think that those are the hard cases. In the end, they will be put in prison. Some of those convictions will have been custodial, that is for sure. What we have here is a story of trying to take action early to stop the escalation, but there is a hard core of people. They are often the ones who get the ASBOs and who are most difficult to deal with. Some of them should be in prison, and some will have been in prison for those convictions.

Q128 Mr Davidson: If they have been in prison and they are re-offending, what evidence is there that an ASBO will be effective, rather than going back to jail?

Sir David Normington: To state the obvious, it depends what they are doing. Sometimes it involves them to court because they have beaten someone up. They may also be making havoc in a local housing estate. We try to deal with both of those things. ASBOs are often issued alongside other convictions.

Q129 Mr Davidson: I want to clarify whether that route is effectively a waste of time for the hard core. Some of the stuff that you are doing is excellent, and I support it for some groups, but I very much doubt its universal applicability. Should you not just identify a whole category of people for whom it is a waste of time? You would be much better focusing where you can make a difference.

Sir David Normington: I think that that is fair.

Ms Casey: I think that it is fair in that by the time somebody breaches an anti-social behaviour order, they are starting their career in the next system. There is a massive crossover at that point. Locally, the youth offending team and others will be looking at things like prolific offending.

Q130 Mr Davidson: Again, I am hesitant about letting you in, because you are just saying back to me what I said in the first place. I am trying to clarify paragraph 2.20 on page 24: “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.” Who is responsible for that lack of timely action?

Sir David Normington: A number of people have the powers, so a number use them. It might be the police, the local authority or the housing trust. It will depend.

Q131 Mr Davidson: This is obviously a major issue. It is certainly a major issue in my area of the Department. I accept that the Scottish position is different, but a perceived lack of action is a major difficulty, and we have made an effort to identify the blockages. Have you?

Sir David Normington: A lot of the work that we do has been trying to identify—
Q132 Mr Davidson: Is that a yes or a no? Have you done work to identify the blockages?

Sir David Normington: Yes.

Ms Casey: Yes is the answer.

Q133 Mr Davidson: Right. Have you identified the blockages and are they enumerated so that you can provide a note that says something like, “50% of the delays are because of the police” and so on, or something similar?

Sir David Normington: I do not know if we could do that precisely, but we could get something as close to that as possible. 6

Q134 Mr Davidson: That would be helpful. I shall turn to paragraph 2.21. Again, it touches on the frustration at what is perceived to be lenient sentencing by magistrates. Have you delved into that? My impression is that most magistrates come from prosperous backgrounds and leafy suburbs where anti-social behaviour is not a problem. In the same way in which wife assault used to be trivialised, so anti-social behaviour is trivialised by such people. Is that a fair analysis?

Ms Casey: I cannot comment on magistrates.

Q135 Mr Davidson: Yes or no?

Ms Casey: No.

Q136 Mr Davidson: Can you tell me about the background of magistrates? Presumably, you have statistics on where they stay and whether those are prosperous areas? Will you let us have those?

Sir David Normington: I would have to go to the Home Office. I expect that we could give you an analysis. Obviously we do not run the magistrates courts—that is a different Department. But I can try and get you that information.

Q137 Mr Davidson: There is an overlap.

Sir David Normington: Yes, there is.

Q138 Mr Davidson: This is a problem.

Sir David Normington: I know that a lot of work is being done to widen the social background of magistrates because the problem that you described is well-known.

Q139 Mr Davidson: You accept that it is part of the problem?

Sir David Normington: I do not know if it is the cause, but I know that we have been trying to deal with and widen the social background of magistrates. I think that we have had some success.

Q140 Mr Davidson: There are two points; one about the magistrates and another about the Crown Prosecution Service providing too little information on the history of the case to the court. Why is that? Is it sloth and idleness or that they do not take it seriously?

Sir David Normington: I do not know for sure. Some of it is that these are new powers and they are learning how to use them. We have a network of specialist prosecutors whose job it is to train prosecutors so that they do not do those sorts of things. It might just be inexperience.

Q141 Mr Davidson: So that problem should be resolved in a year’s time?

Sir David Normington: I hope that it will be a lot better in a year.

Q142 Mr Davidson: May I finish on evictions, which I was not going to touch upon until it was mentioned? It concerns me greatly. You seem not to take into account the fact that eviction enormously improves the lives of the neighbours of those evicted. The thrust of your answer focused on the problems faced by those being evicted. I understand much of that, but you seem to have no regard for the benefits that would flow from an eviction to those around the anti-social family. How do you strike a balance between decent, ordinary people trying to get on with their lives and a family with problems, which might be deep-seated, who require a great deal of support? It seems that we have got the balance wrong.

Sir David Normington: I would like to make it clear that we are on the side of the decent people.

Q143 Mr Davidson: So why do you not evict their anti-social neighbours? Why did you tell us that eviction is the last resort?

Sir David Normington: Eviction has to be the last resort because those families will have to be put somewhere else. We and local authorities try to provide sheltered accommodation for those people, otherwise there will be a problem somewhere else.

Q144 Mr Davidson: Most of them will be in working class areas with multiple deprivation. Why not evict some of them to posh areas for a change?

Sir David Normington: The evictions will take place where there is anti-social behaviour, not according to whether people are posh.

Q145 Mr Davidson: That is right, but they are disproportionately in working class areas. On your point about moving them somewhere else, these problem families already have problems and difficulties and in many cases are struggling to keep their heads above water. Their children will be at school and maybe not getting support and so on. Keeping those families there drags other families down further.

Sir David Normington: Making it a condition of wherever they go next that they accept some support and help is important. In the end, society has to cope with these families. It has to find a way to solve their drug problems, or their alcohol problems, or whatever it is.

Q146 Mr Davidson: Not in my constituency, if I can possibly help it. That is not an unreasonable position for an elected Member to take.
Ms Casey: Mr Davidson, I need to be absolutely clear that I think eviction is sometimes necessary, but we need to stop the bad behaviour as early as is humanly possible for the sake of the community. The whole drive to tackle anti-social behaviour has been about being on the public’s side and trying to do the right thing by the public. Our intolerance of anti-social behaviour has been something we have had to try to inculcate throughout the system, to get everybody else to be as intolerant and to want the process to be quick. All I was saying in that respect is that I want to see the behaviour stopped at the earliest possible opportunity. If they need to evict, our family intervention projects say to some social housing tenants, “If you want to stay together you will have to move into this project.” What we are suggesting is incredibly tough and some of it is based on the Dundee project, which I am sure you are aware of, where you say to someone, “Take this help or you face your children going into care.” We are very tough with these families.

Q147 Mr Williams: That was not the impression you gave in response to an earlier question.

Ms Casey: Forgive me for that.

Q148 Mr Williams: Mr Davidson has touched on the same area on which I intended to ask a question. I start by saying that it is important to recognise that there is a good story in this Report, as well as a bad story, so we do not want you to think that we are not aware of what is being achieved. Obviously we focus on where more might be needed. As figure 4 shows, two in three people do not offend again after they have received some form of intervention; eight in 10 do not so after they have received two interventions and nine in 10 after they have received three, so there is a positive story to tell. Unfortunately from your point of view, inevitably what the press will seize on are the cases that we also seize on. I looked at the same figures as Mr Davidson—a group in which one fifth of the people convicted had committed more than half of the offences and as he rightly said that group had an average of 50 convictions. If it had an average of 50, what is the highest number in that group?

Sir David Normington: To any normal person 50 seems plenty, does it not? This Report does not, and cannot, cover all the other things we are doing. Our programme to focus on persistent and prolific offenders is for these people, and that is a very, very focused activity.

Q149 Mr Williams: That is where I wanted to go. Will you give the Committee a note on this particular group and say what is the top of the range so we can see just how hardened some of these individuals are?

Sir David Normington: We are talking about a very small number, by the way. It is important to say that.

Q150 Mr Williams: I emphasised that in pointing out how many people behaved more responsibly once they had been tackled. From your point of view, you find it difficult, if not impossible, to keep track of figures all over the country for all the schemes at the moment, for resource reasons. How far are you focusing your analysis on this group, which is causing so much misery, and what form does that analysis take?

Sir David Normington: It is not just analysis. We require the local partnerships to identify the prolific and persistent offenders and to focus action of all sorts on that. That is not just anti-social behaviour action, it is other action as well. I have somewhere here the figures for the number of people overall who are being focused on. I know it includes a focus on 4,200 young people who are at risk of becoming prolific offenders. They get a lot of support and attention from all the local services.

Q151 Mr Williams: What, if anything, has proved at all effective against this particularly hardened group? Have you been able to identify anything that they respond to?

Sir David Normington: There is a whole range of things, because the problem might be family breakdown, mental health problems or drugs. It might be an obvious thing to say, but we need to tailor the action to the needs of those people and that is what we try to do; it is what the programme does. There is no magic bullet, because by the time they are on the programme, they are a long way down the line; they are problem cases. I go back to some of the things that we said earlier about what can be done further upstream.

Q152 Mr Williams: Yesterday, The Sunday Times carried a story about the planned introduction of what it called super-ASBOs. Is that accurate? Is that what is going to happen? Can you tell us any more about those?

Sir David Normington: I think this is about action that the Government are considering for violent offenders right at the other end of the spectrum. The super-ASBO is nothing to do with anti-social behaviour; it is to do with the orders that are placed on violent offenders. We are looking at what can be done to protect people against them. They are serious and hardened criminals.

Q153 Mr Williams: Okay. I shall not pursue that; it is obviously not part of what we are here to discuss. My final point is one of personal interest. Last year I was lucky enough to get a Private Member’s Bill passed on attacks on emergency workers. One of the things that came over in talking to fire officers, for example, was the large number of youngsters who are involved in ambushes, impeding and stoning fire officers and all the rest of it. They said that one of the problems is that there is no point in fining the youngsters because they cannot or will not pay the fines. Is that valid?

Ms Casey: If children were involved, our strategy would be to start with the parents. One of our reasons for announcing that £80 million will be spent

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8 The person in the NAO’s sample of 893 cases with the most convictions had 271 convictions and had breached his Anti-Social Behaviour Order 25 times.
Sir David Normington KCB and Louise Casey

over the next few years on additional support for parents is that we need to get through to those families about what their children are doing, if they see fit to stone fire officers while they are going about their business. I would expect to use the range of tools available—whether they are fines or acceptable behaviour contracts—get the parents in, get the child in and work out what needs to be done. Fining is just one of the things that can be done.

Q154 Mr Williams: Who is responsible for the fine, if a fine is imposed on a juvenile?
Sir David Normington: Do you mean who is responsible for paying it?
Mr Williams: Yes.
Ms Casey: I think that the parents are responsible.

Q155 Mr Williams: It does fall on the parents, then. Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q156 Mr Williams: So where, at the end of the day, there is non-payment, it is adults who are responsible and children who learn that that is the way to behave because you can get away with it.
Ms Casey: That is why the focus on parents is so crucial. We have to get to parents who are unwilling to take help, and help their children to be brought up properly. The evidence is enormously compelling for getting difficult parents in to parenting classes. Even those who do not want to go to that parenting class, and have to be forced to do so by the court, are as successful as those who volunteer to go. The more we can get to parents, the more effectively we can deal with some of the problems.

Q157 Mr Williams: I am surprised, reading figure 1, that the individual support order, which complements the anti-social behaviour order, is very little used, yet it tries to address the cause.
Sir David Normington: It partly addresses the issue, and we want to see it used more. It was specifically introduced to address the problem that we have just been discussing—to put obligations on people to do things, rather than just to have punitive orders. We are putting a lot of effort into getting them used better.

Q158 Mr Williams: I suppose that you are then utterly dependent on the ability of the local social services, would it be, to provide the necessary—
Ms Casey: The youth offending team.
Sir David Normington: The youth offending teams do have the resources to do that, but the orders need to be made in the first place.

Q159 Mr Williams: Why have so few been made?
Ms Casey: In fairness, some of these things are incredibly new. If you look at our survey of who is using what powers year in, year out, you will see that a while ago people were not using parenting orders or contracts either. Now there is greater knowledge of how effective they are and people will use them and courts use them. At the beginning the Youth Justice Board felt that it did not have any resources for individual support orders. Two years ago we gave them resources. Now there is a sense, “This is a good thing. Please use it.” We are running a take-up campaign. If the numbers of individual support orders do not go up, I would be concerned and we would take that up with the Youth Justice Board.

Q160 Mr Williams: Can I ask you to do me a personal favour in providing a written note. My Act received Royal Assent on 30 October. It has not yet had a commencement order. Could you send the Committee a note telling us when a commencement order is likely to be made?
Sir David Normington: This is one of our recent Acts?

Q161 Mr Williams: It is Home Office legislation. If you could find that out for me I would be very grateful.
Sir David Normington: We will do that.

Q162 Mr Williams: A final point, could I say to you and Ms Casey, do not be upset about our very kindly Chairman, who is normally very courteous to all our witnesses. We appreciate enthusiasm. It is just that we are time-limited and he is nowhere near as kind to us as he normally is to the witnesses.
Chairman: I think Mr Mitchell has a final supplementary question.

Q163 Mr Mitchell: I heard the sound of violins playing while Alan was speaking. He asked one of the questions that I was going to put about individual support orders, which seem to be a necessary concomitant. It is surprising that they are not used on any scale. Let me change the question. We have figures for the success of warning letters, acceptable behaviour contracts and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, but there are no figures on the success and whether they were breached of housing injunctions, parenting contracts, parenting orders and dispersal orders. Can you give us figures on their success or failure?
Ms Casey: We can. We have figures on all of those.

Q164 Mr Mitchell: They are not in the Report?
Ms Casey: No.
Sir David Normington: The NAO did not look at those very much. They referred to them but they were not looking at them specifically. We can give you some more figures on those if you would like.

Q165 Mr Mitchell: You could supply us with the same figures?
Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q166 Mr Mitchell: Could you tell us whether there are differences in their use by area? In some places it seems that the message is not getting through.

9 Note by witness: The Emergency Workers (Obstruction) Act 2006 creates an offence of obstructing a worker responding to emergency circumstances. The Act will come into effect on the 20 February 2007. In the meantime we are working with other Departments to ensure that guidance and information about the Act is widely available.
10 Ev 27
Ms Casey: The survey that we have done every year shows that different areas have a different take-up of powers. Some use housing injunctions where others would use another tool. The NAO Report says that. It says that different organisations sometimes use different tools.

Q167 Mr Mitchell: Why?
Ms Casey: What is important is that areas are tackling anti-social behaviour and that the public know that. That is the bottom line for us. It does not matter to Steve Hill whether it is an ASBO, an injunction or whatever. What they are concerned about is that the behaviour stops.

Sir David Normington: It is time for a bit more science. We need to ask these questions a bit more in our evaluation.

Q168 Chairman: I will not ask any more questions because time is running out. We need a couple of notes for the sake of completing our inquiry. The uneven level of support for witnesses was specifically flagged up in paragraph 2.23. We also need a note on paragraph 2.20 and the visit that the NAO made to local authority-level services and the lack of capacity in four out of 10 areas. There is an important area that we have not dealt with in paragraph 3.6 about the lack of responsiveness from some mental health and social service departments. I think we might have a note on those three paragraphs just for the sake of completeness of our inquiry.

Sir David, Ms Casey, thank you very much for coming. Clearly this is a good Report in the sense that these Orders seem to have an effect. There is clearly also a hard core. I am sure that we would want to return to how we can deal with that hard core in our Report. I fear that the answer is fairly obvious, but be that as it may.

If ever you have a conversation with the Cabinet Secretary, Sir David, will you please tell him that we want such inquiries to be positive, and therefore we value it when civil servants attend the Committee who clearly have commitment and enthusiasm of Ms Casey? We are impressed. Thank you.

11 Ev 27–28
12 Note by witness: Although the allocation of resources to legal services departments is a matter for local areas to decide, we have put a lot of effort into making the operation of orders and other tools as simple as possible. This commitment does need to be matched by a commitment from the local authority that tackling anti-social behaviour will be a key objective for their legal resources. We do of course share the Committee’s concern about variations in local capacity and/or commitment, and that was one of the reasons for introducing “face the people” sessions where local decision makers and the communities whom they serve could discuss the match between expectation, experience and capacity.

Memorandum submitted by Home Office

In advance of my attendance at the Public Accounts Committee meeting in respect of the NAO Report, *Tackling anti-social behaviour*, I would like to draw the Committee’s attention to two issues that have arisen since this Report was published on 7 December.

DATA ON PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

I am afraid that there was an error in the computer code used to provide the data underpinning Figures 8, 12 and 18 of the Report. This data was drawn from the Department of Communities and Local Government’s survey and we had not picked up on the significance of this error when we provided the data to the NAO. I have apologised to the Comptroller and Auditor General. I would like to extend the apology to you and the Committee.

We have now provided the NAO with corrected data on perceptions of anti-social behaviour and they have revised figures 8, 12 and 18 of the Report in consultation with my staff. Copies are attached at annex A and I understand that the NAO has supplied these to you and the Committee already. The new calculation does not affect the NAO’s basic finding that public perception varies significantly across local areas.
Updated Information on the Number of ASBOs Issued

I also thought it would be helpful to update the data on the number of ASBOs that have been issued. When we provided the original data to the NAO we explained an exercise was underway to improve and update that data. I am sorry that we were not able to provide it before the NAO Report was cleared by us. But we have now published it and I attach a table at annex B, which shows the total number of ASBOs issued since 1999 broken down by area.

This new data does not affect the analysis in the NAO’s Report. But it increases the number of ASBOs recorded in Figure 9, on page 18 of the Report, to 2,874 between 2003–04 and 4,274 between 2004–05. I understand that the NAO have provided the Committee with a corrected Figure 9 which includes these new figures for ASBOs and a number of other corrections which the NAO have made. I am copying this letter to Sir John Bourn and the Clerk of the Committee.

Sir David Normington KCB

11 January 2007

Annex A

Updates to the tables which appear in the NAO’s Report

Figure 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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deprivation Index¹</th>
<th>Easington</th>
<th>Exeter</th>
<th>Hackney</th>
<th>Liverpool</th>
<th>Manchester</th>
<th>Wear Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deprivation Rank</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion perceiving high levels of anti-social behaviour²</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban/Rural</th>
<th>Mid-Rural</th>
<th>Small Urban</th>
<th>Major Urban</th>
<th>Major Urban</th>
<th>Major Urban</th>
<th>Small Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warning Letter</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable Behaviour Contract</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other early intervention</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Social Behaviour Order</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases examined</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of case list provided by Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator</td>
<td>1,920</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>1,921</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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”.

Figure 18

AREAS SELECTED FOR LOCAL VISITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Type of visit</th>
<th>Urban/ Rural</th>
<th>Deprivation Index</th>
<th>% Perceiving high levels of ASB according to BVPI</th>
<th>Incidents of ASB related to criminal damage per 100,000 of the population</th>
<th>Trailblazer/ Action Area</th>
<th>Schemes of special interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>27.07</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>2,939</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easington</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>41.75</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>1,605</td>
<td>Action Area</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>21.58</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>1,215</td>
<td>Action Area</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackney</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>45.06</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>1,173</td>
<td>Action Area</td>
<td>ASB prosecutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>49.78</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>2,462</td>
<td>Trailblazer</td>
<td>Community Justice Centre and ASB prosecutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>48.91</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>2,780</td>
<td>Trailblazer</td>
<td>ASB prosecutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merthyr</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>43.29</td>
<td>Data not available</td>
<td>1,624</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>ASB prosecutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tydfil</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>40.41</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Tackling graffiti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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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”.

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.
Committee of Public Accounts: Evidence

Incidents of ASB related Perceiving criminal high levels damage per 100,000 of ASB according the Trailblazer/ special Area visit Rural Index to BVPI population Action Area interest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Type of visit</th>
<th>Urban/ Rural</th>
<th>Deprivation</th>
<th>Index</th>
<th>% of ASB related</th>
<th>Criminal damage</th>
<th>Schemes of special interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Cornwall</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>22.82</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No ASB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Lincolnshire</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>21.23</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>2,325</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No ASB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nottingham</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>41.75</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>3,230</td>
<td>Action Area</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear Valley</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>32.57</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>1,938</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Annex B

ASBOS ISSUED BETWEEN APRIL 1999 AND DECEMBER 2005

Persons All Ages and Unknown: Number (as Reported to the Home Office) of Anti-social Behaviour Orders Issued at All Courts by Area, April 1999 to December 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CJS area</th>
<th>Total ASBOs issued</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avon &amp; Somerset</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedfordshire</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridgeshire</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheshire</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumbria</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derbyshire</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devon &amp; Cornwall</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorset</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucestershire</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater London</td>
<td>1,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Manchester</td>
<td>1,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampshire</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humberside</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancashire</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicestershire</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincolnshire</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merseyside</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northamptonshire</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumbria</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Yorkshire</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nottinghamshire</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Yorkshire</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thames Valley</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwickshire</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Committee of Public Accounts: Evidence

Sir David Normington KCB
Permanent Secretary

11 January 2007

Supplementary memorandum submitted by the Home Office

Question 60 (Mr Don Touhig): If someone is charged with an offence that requires a court appearance, how long does it take to bring them to court?

1. The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) publishes National Statistics on the timeliness of criminal proceedings in Magistrates Courts. These include estimates of the average times from offence to charge (or laying of information in summonsed cases), from charge/laying of information to first court listing, and from first listing to completion.

2. The most recent published figures are available on the DCA website at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/statistics/crjust.htm. The publications include a full explanation of the source and derivation of the statistics.

3. These show that in September 2006 the average time from offence to first listing in court was 115 days, the same as in September 2005.

4. The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) also publishes a command paper, Judicial Statistics, which has timeliness of criminal proceedings in the Crown Court. These show the average waiting time from arrival in the Crown Court jurisdiction to the start of the first main hearing (either the start of the trial or the date of a guilty plea). However, it is not possible to compile accurate timing estimates for Crown Court cases covering the period prior to their arrival in the Court’s jurisdiction.

5. The most recent published figures are available on the DCA website at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/dept/depstrat.htm#part4 and Crown Court statistics are within chapter 6 of this document.

6. These show that in 2005 the average time from arrival in the Crown Court to first main hearing in court was 107 days.

7. The Simple, Speedy and Summary Justice Programme launched last year is focussed on improving the speed and effectiveness of magistrates’ courts cases. We are also developing plans for a Next Day Justice system for simpler cases such as quality of life crimes. The ambition is that the majority of simple cases should take from a day to six weeks from charge to disposal as opposed to the current system which averages 21 plus weeks.

8. In relation to juveniles, we continue to meet the persistent young offender pledge by not exceeding the average of 71 days from arrest to sentence.

9. With specific regard to anti-social behaviour we have taken the following steps to improve the response of prosecutors and the courts:

   — We have established 157 Anti-social Behaviour Response Courts (ASBRCs) situated within 31 Criminal Justice. These courts ensure that anti-social behaviour cases are dealt with swiftly and efficiently and victims and witnesses are supported. Magistrates and court staff are also fully trained and aware of local issues and concerns. Feedback on their impact is positive showing that they enable courts to respond to anti-social behaviour in a visible and consistent way.

   — In April 2004 we established a team of 14 specialist anti-social behaviour prosecutors who are charged with developing partnership working between the CPS, the police, local authorities, social landlords and others involved in taking action against anti-social behaviour across the country. They deliver training and advice to prosecutors on tools and powers such as applying to the courts for ASBOs and ASBO breaches. In addition co-ordinators have been appointed CPS-wide to ensure there is a focus on anti-social behaviour issues in every CPS area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CJS area</th>
<th>Total ASBOs issued</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Mercia</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td>696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>9,431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyfed Powys</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwent</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Wales</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Wales</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total E&amp;W</td>
<td>9,853</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Where the community require immediate protection from anti-social behaviour, the police, local authorities and others can apply for interim ASBOs. They can be made very quickly at an initial hearing, and can impose the same prohibitions and same penalties for breach as a full order.

Question 64 (Mr Don Touhig): What polling have you done to find out what people think of the crime and disorder reduction partnerships?

1. Whilst we have not carried out polling on public opinion on Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) we have commissioned a review of the partnership provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Home Office, the Local Government Association, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Association of Police Authorities worked together on the review, consulting widely with stakeholders and practitioners. The review identified a number of ways that CDRP performance could be improved and new national minimum standards for CDRPs are being introduced. Regulations will be published and commence from early summer 2007, with accompanying guidance. We intend to have published the regulations and guidance in good time for the CDRP to undertake a strategic assessment of their areas and produce an annual three year rolling plan by April 2008.

2. One key strand of the national standards will be community engagement and consultation with the aim of making partnerships more visible and answerable to local communities. This includes “Face the People” sessions as set out in the Respect Action Plan, and the Community Call for Action, which will enable local communities to hold the police, local authorities and their partners to account if they have failed to deal effectively with a community safety problem in their local area.

Question 72 (Mr Don Touhig): Details of the schemes in place to make school facilities available after school is over across the country?

1. The Extended Schools programme recognises and promotes the role of the school as a community asset. Extended Schools are currently being rolled-out across England and over 3,000 are already delivering the core offer of services—childcare 8 am–6 pm; parenting and family support; activities including study support, sport, music clubs; swift and easy referral to specialist services such as speech therapy and health drop-ins; community use of facilities. By 2010 all schools in England will be offering access to the core extended services.

2. Education and children’s services are devolved issues and the Welsh Assembly Government is encouraging Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and schools in Wales to adopt a strategic approach to developing a wide range of services, activities and facilities for the community out of school hours. £3 million was made available to LEAs in Wales 2005–06, rising to £3.6 million in this financial year, to support this initiative. A similar level of funding will be provided for 2007–08.

3. In the LEA area in which Mr Touhig’s constituency is situated, 31 schools have benefited from the grant with projects ranging from the purchase of equipment to extend the use of the outdoor classroom, the development of community training and its links to a Forest School, the opening up and development of school IT facilities for use by Youth Services as a Cyber Café and for adult education under the RISE programme, and the development of facilities for young people and adults with learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

Question 93 (Mr Austin Mitchell): Information on the differences between the strategies being employed in Grimsby and Hull to tackle anti-social behaviour?

1. Data from the 2003 Local Government User Satisfaction Survey shows:
   - Kingston-upon-Hull 30.5% of the population perceived a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area (ranked 294/387);
   - North East Lincs (including Grimsby) 55% of the population perceived a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area (ranked 16 out of 387).

2. Kingston-upon-Hull has committed to tackling anti-social behaviour as a strategic priority and made considerable improvements over the last three years. They have restructured their anti-social behaviour team to provide a multi-agency approach to housing, environment and “street-scene” anti-social behaviour. There is a team of 24 dedicated staff with a case-management approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and a dedicated phone line is available which has increased the level of reporting of anti-social behaviour.

3. Kingston-upon-Hull has recently been announced as one of the first wave of Respect Areas which have earned the right to be exemplars of the Respect programme by their strong track record in tackling anti-social behaviour, and a willingness and capacity to do more.

4. Historically North East Lincolnshire (including Grimsby) has not prioritised tackling anti-social behaviour in the way we have seen Kingston-Upon-Hull doing, for example with a sufficiently staffed dedicated anti-social behaviour team. However, this is changing and there is now agreement at a senior level to make anti-social behaviour a priority. This is reflected in a new “stretch target” which could mean they
receive extra funding if targets to tackle anti-social behaviour are reached as part of their Local Area Agreement. Their work is being supported by the Respect Task Force through visits and dedicated Action Days.

Question 133 (Mr Ian Davidson): *Information on what accounts for blockages to the system preventing legal services departments from dealing with breaches of anti-social behaviour legislation in a timely manner?*

1. Although we are unable to provide numerical data on reasons for delays and blockages by legal departments, we are aware of the principal reasons from our work with areas and frontline practitioners.

2. The anti-social behaviour legislation is still relatively new and some legal departments will still be getting up to speed on its application. There can be reluctance to take cases forward quickly, for example, legal departments can request large amounts of evidence gathered over a long period—far more than is actually needed or required by the courts. In turn, victims and witnesses will be reluctant to come forward or pursue cases. There remains also a lack of understanding on the impact of anti-social behaviour which means in some areas it is still not being prioritised.

3. To address this, legal powers have been designed to be as straightforward to use as possible and we have been proactive in promoting and disseminating good practice through training and tailored support. For example through the Academy programme, guidance and step by step guides, and by Respect Action Days which are tailored local events to help agencies grapple with particular problems in their area. Action Days and Academies are delivered by our network of expert practitioners who include local government lawyers, who have wide experience in using the legislation.

4. In the criminal court, CPS prosecute anti-social behaviour related cases, such as ASBO breaches. In 2004 we established a network of 14 specialist anti-social behaviour prosecutors who are charged with developing partnership working between the CPS, the police, local authorities, social landlords and others to improve the response to nuisance related cases. They deliver training and provide advice to prosecutors on tools and powers such as applying to the courts for ASBOs and ASBO breaches.

5. This approach will increase familiarity with the relevant tools and boost confidence of legal services. However, this learning needs constant reinforcement, and we intend to continue with a rolling programme of training and awareness raising, as well as continuing with the website, step-by-step guides and updating the guidance.

Question 136 (Mr Ian Davidson): *Information regarding the social background of magistrates and work being undertaken to ensure that they are recruited from more diverse backgrounds?*

1. The tables below give information regarding the social background, age and employment profile of Magistrates. The first profile chart shows the diversity profile of the magistracy over the last five years. It shows that nation-wide the magistracy is broadly reflective in terms of gender and ethnicity.

**CURRENT BREAKDOWN OF THE MAGISTRACY—INFORMATION PROVIDED BY DCA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial year end</th>
<th>Total number</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Under 40</td>
<td>40–49</td>
<td>50–59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>28,479</td>
<td>1,091</td>
<td>4,966</td>
<td>13,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>28,344</td>
<td>1,045</td>
<td>4,662</td>
<td>12,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>28,029</td>
<td>1,016</td>
<td>4,008</td>
<td>13,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>28,300</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>4,377</td>
<td>11,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006**</td>
<td>28,865</td>
<td>1,172</td>
<td>4,635</td>
<td>11,902</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These categories have only been used since 2006.

**Further appointments will feed into this over time.
Committee of Public Accounts: Evidence  Ev 27

**Occupational Breakdown of Magistrates January 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Analysis</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in paid employment</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never been in paid employment</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager or senior official</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Trades</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Service</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales or Customer Service</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process plant or machine operative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin or Secretarial</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Occupation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Occupation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professional or Technical</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This information is provided by DCA who caution that details on occupation are provided by Magistrates at the time of recruitment so the information may be outdated. For example, DCA are not told when a magistrate who was in employment when he was recruited subsequently resigns.

**Magistrates Diversity Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of magistrates at figure at April 2006</th>
<th>Under 40</th>
<th>40–49</th>
<th>50–59</th>
<th>60–69</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Not known</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28,865</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4,635</td>
<td>11,902</td>
<td>11,156</td>
<td>14,519</td>
<td>14,346</td>
<td>26,780</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Breakdown</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>16.05</td>
<td>41.23</td>
<td>38.64</td>
<td>50.29</td>
<td>49.70</td>
<td>92.77</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>0.938</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The main national concern is age. Over 80% of magistrates are over 50 and the average age is around 57. A key reason for this is that magistrates are unpaid which has traditionally made the magistracy more attractive to those not in full time work.

3. Support for magistrates’ recruitment, including measures to promote diversity is delivered through the Magistrates' National Recruitment Strategy, part of Magistrates and Senior Appointments Division of the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Progress to date on MNRS has included:

   — advertising materials with a consistent national identity;
   — a dedicated website for candidates (and their employers) www.magistrates.gov.uk;
   — 80 recruitment campaigns across the country in 2006–07;
   — greater flexibility for Advisory Committees over when they recruit and submit appointment recommendations to cut down the time the process takes;
   — comprehensive programme of employer engagement to encourage more employers to release staff for magistrate service; and
   — specific diversity initiatives—Magistrates in the Community, Mock Trials, and Magistrates’ Shadowing Scheme.

4. As a result in part of the work undertaken, the proportion of magistrates from BME communities has risen over the last three years to just over 7%; close to overall population level of 7.9%.

**Question 163 (Mr Austin Mitchell): Success and breaches of interventions such as housing injunctions, parenting contracts, parenting orders and dispersal orders?**

1. The Home Office is not able to provide information about when those on housing injunctions, parenting contracts and orders or dispersal powers fail to meet their conditions and apologises for the impression given inadvertently during the hearing that we had.

2. Specifically, on the success of parenting orders, the evaluation of the Youth Justice Board parenting programmes found that whilst parents compelled to attend parenting classes through orders were initially reluctant and indeed hostile, they were, by the end, very positive. Some parents described the project as having acted like a “lifeline” at a time of crisis, and almost all reported feeling relief from discovering they were “not the only one” having problems with children.
3. The Home Office is committed to carrying out more evaluations of the relative effectiveness of anti-social behaviour interventions and is currently being advised by its research department as to the best course of action.

Question 168 (Mr Edward Leigh): Uneven level of support to victims and witnesses (paragraph 2.23 of the NAO Report)?

1. Victims of crime differ from victims of anti-social behaviour and a different approach is needed to support them. Unlike crime, anti-social behaviour is often experienced daily and the perpetrators are often known to the victim; they may live next door or on the same street. The overall approach has been to ensure that agencies understand these differences, remove barriers to reporting problems and to build people’s confidence to come forward and to understand that action can be taken.

2. Making it easy and straightforward to complain is one important way of tackling the under-reporting of anti-social behaviour. We expect all areas to provide an easy and accessible way to enable residents to make complaints about anti-social behaviour. We have supported over 50 local authority areas to establish a dedicated single telephone line to enable communities to report quickly and easily. In all these areas there is a commitment to feed back action taken to people who have reported it.

3. The quality of the first contact is all important. It can take a lot of courage to report and often victims will have been experiencing problems for some time before they complain. Secondly, treating people well from the first will increase the chances of taking forward action—some cases will end up in court and while it is possible to use hearsay evidence, nothing really replaces first person testimony.

4. These messages are promoted through all the work of ASBU and the Respect Task Force. There are dedicated sessions at Academies on victims and witnesses. Best practice guidance has been produced by the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit on a step by step approach to supporting victims and witnesses. In November 2006 further Home Office guidance was issued to the police and practitioners responsible for identifying and supporting intimidated witnesses, including those suffering from anti-social behaviour.

5. Where people are unable to give evidence first hand, there are now in place special measures for vulnerable witnesses in ASBO hearings, through the Serious and Organised Crime and Police Act 2005.

6. It is important to build the public’s confidence that they can play their part in tackling anti-social behaviour. This is why we have run the Respect Awards for Taking a Stand—ordinary people who have had the courage to stand up against anti-social behaviour—there are now over 500 TASA winners.

7. As with all aspects anti-social behaviour policy and practice, this is a new and developing area and it is a priority for the Home Office. In our survey of CDRPs last year, 67% respondents reported that their service/support scheme for victims and witnesses had improved over that year and local recognition schemes had been established for people to take a stand against anti-social behaviour.

Question 168 (Mr Edward Leigh): Lack of responsiveness of mental health teams and social service departments (paragraph 3.6 of the NAO Report)?

1. We understand the concerns about the engagement of support services. Getting different services to address the multi-faceted responses needed for those involved in anti-social behaviour is a major challenge.

2. It is important to stress that there are major Government programmes —education, mental health services, housing regeneration schemes, and early intervention schemes such as the Sure Start programme or the Youth Offending Teams work—focused on improving life chances for individuals and strengthening individuals, families and communities against the circumstances in which anti-social behaviour takes hold. These services also provide support for those suffering underlying problems which lead to bad behaviour.

3. However, in the context of the anti-social behaviour strategy, the starting point is that unacceptable behaviour should not be left unaddressed. In 2003, agencies, with few exceptions, did not have a clear focus around taking action to stop anti-social behaviour. That reluctance can grow where a perpetrator has support needs or is reluctant to take help. However, it does neither the perpetrator nor the community any good not to take action—that is central to the twin-track approach.

4. It is not always the case that support services are not available. In fact, in many cases large numbers of services are involved with individual family members but are dealing with one family member or a specific problem rather than looking at the family as a whole and the linkages between problems. This lack of focus allows problems to fester with little progress being made to the frustration of the community and agencies around them.

5. The Respect programme is a cross-government approach and DfES with their responsibilities around parenting, education, support for young people and Department of Health with their responsibility around mental health services are signed up to the twin track approach.

6. Through the Respect programme there are specific programmes which illustrate the twin track approach and the importance of a strong and focused approach to the provision of support.
— Family intervention projects (FIPs). These projects combine intensive support with supervision and sanctions for the most challenging families. Many of the most dysfunctional families have chronic problems of mental health, absence from school, drug problems, unemployment, and instability. The FIPs ‘grip’ the family and its problems and crucially ‘grip’ the many agencies around them to focus on improving family functioning and reduce anti-social behaviour.

For each of these projects, there is senior buy in from community safety and children’s services in each area. Department of Health have committed to providing a nominated officer locally to each FIP to help them access services the families need which will include mental health services and a nominated officer for Job Centre plus support.

The work of the FIPs will inform a government strategy to improve services’ response to problem families which will be taken forward by the Social Exclusion Unit:

— Parenting: through the respect drive we are significantly increasing the availability, quality and take up of parenting provision for families at risk of anti-social behaviour. Good quality evidence based parenting programmes can positively affect mental health. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommends parenting programmes in tackling conduct disorder which is the largest single group of psychiatric disorders in children and the main reason for referrals to child and adolescent mental health services. In November, the Government announced additional funding for parenting experts in 77 areas to work with a specific focus on parents of children who are giving cause for concern by their behaviour in the community.

7. The Home Office is working with other government departments to examine the effectiveness of alternative approaches to improving outcomes for people with chaotic lives and multiple needs, pilot the most promising approaches and use the findings to inform further policy development. Its scope is likely to cover those in contact with the CJS which may include perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. The pilots, for which £6 million has been identified across government departments over three years, will be launched in 2007, with early results feeding back through existing delivery mechanisms and programmes later in the year.

Supplementary memorandum submitted by the National Audit Office

Question 124 (Mr Ian Davidson): Can you substantiate that by telling me about the 65% by area and social class?

The data for the NAO’s case review was drawn from six areas of which four rank within the top 10 most deprived areas in England. The fieldwork was not aimed at showing a difference between the effectiveness of interventions in more and less deprived areas. However, we have split down the results of the data displayed in Figure 4 of the report so that it is possible to see the results by individual area. This shows that the level of deprivation associated with the area did not appear to have a significant influence on whether individuals went on to receive more than one intervention.

However, when looking at the results broken down by area it is necessary to consider that, as explained in paragraph 2.6 of the report, changes in the behaviour of the individuals who received interventions were not necessarily caused by the intervention. It is also not the case that those who received only one intervention had necessarily stopped from behaving anti-socially. The capacity of anti-social behaviour teams within individual areas may have influenced the proportion of the sample who went on to receive further interventions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deprivation Percentage Percentage Percentage Percentage Percentage Number of people aged 16 or over on state benefit, unemployed or lowest grade workers</th>
<th>Percentage receiving high or fairly high levels of anti-social behaviour</th>
<th>Percentage receiving only one intervention</th>
<th>Percentage receiving two or more interventions</th>
<th>Percentage receiving three or more interventions</th>
<th>Number of cases examined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easington</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackney</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear Valley</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes:
1. Deprivation index is calculated on the basis of: income deprivation; employment deprivation; health deprivation and desirability; education, skills and training deprivation; barriers to housing and services; crime and living environment deprivation.
2. Percentage of people aged 16 or over on state benefit, unemployed or lowest grade workers.
3. The percentage of people perceiving high or fairly high levels of Anti-Social Behaviour.
   Source: Date from the Local Government User Satisfaction Survey supplied by the Home Office.
4. The total of the four columns relating to the percentage of people receiving interventions should not equal 100%.

Letter from Chief Executive, Barnardo’s to the Chairman of the Committee

I am writing on behalf of Barnardo’s and BIBIC (British Institute for Brain Injured Children) to follow-up on the evidence given by Louise Casey to the Public Accounts Committee on 15 January 2007.

At this evidence session Annette Brooke MP asked about ASBOs given to individuals with Asperger’s Syndrome (question 102), to which the response was that Louise Casey was “delighted to be able to say” that charities have not been able to provide cases where vulnerable people have been given ASBOs despite requests from the Respect Taskforce.

Both Barnardo’s and BIBIC refute that claim; as BIBIC and other charities sent information about cases to the Respect Taskforce over a year ago. We wanted to bring this to the Committee’s attention, and have been given ASBOs, and have also raised it directly with Louise Casey. We believe it should be the responsibility of Government to monitor and address the impact of their policies in respect of disability and other factors; although of course charities like ourselves campaign to highlight these issues and suggest solutions.

The most substantial evidence comes from BIBIC’s survey of Anti-social Behaviour Officers and Youth Offender Teams for the BBC in 2005, which found that over a third of under-17s who were given ASBOs had a diagnosable mental health disorder. The survey demonstrated a huge difference in recognition of the young people’s learning difficulties. Anti-social Behaviour Officers look at the individual cases and produce the order. They reported 5% of their youth cases had special needs or a learning difficulty. This compared with 38% reported by youth offending team officers who had seen conditions that included autism, ADHD, moderate learning difficulties and emerging personality disorders, depression and self harming. They estimated that 6% had a mental age of less than 10 years old. It is important to note that the survey looked at diagnosed and not suspected, mental health disorders.

Information on the Respect website states that “if there is evidence that suggests a person against whom an ASBO is being sought may be suffering from drug, alcohol or mental health problems, the necessary support should be provided by social services or other support agencies. Such support should be run in parallel with the collection of evidence and application for an order, where an application for an order is deemed necessary. . . A practitioner with specialist knowledge in the relevant fields should be involved in an assessment process to determine the cause of the behaviour and how it can be addressed. The assessment should take account of any known disability as well as uncovering undiagnosed problems.”

Unfortunately in our experience this is not happening consistently on the ground. There are some areas of good practice such as the Barnardo’s Hartbeat project in Hartlepool which works with the Youth Offending Team to intervene early with young people to address the causes of anti-social behaviour and crime, and reduces re-offending by approximately 85%.

Both charities are concerned that whilst ignorance of the numbers of ASBOs being given to individuals with diagnosed mental health disorders persists, inappropriate sanctions will continue to be imposed which do nothing to tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour.

Martin Narey
Chief Executive
Barnardo’s and on behalf of
Julie Spencer-Cingo, Chief Executive of BIBIC
23 April 2007