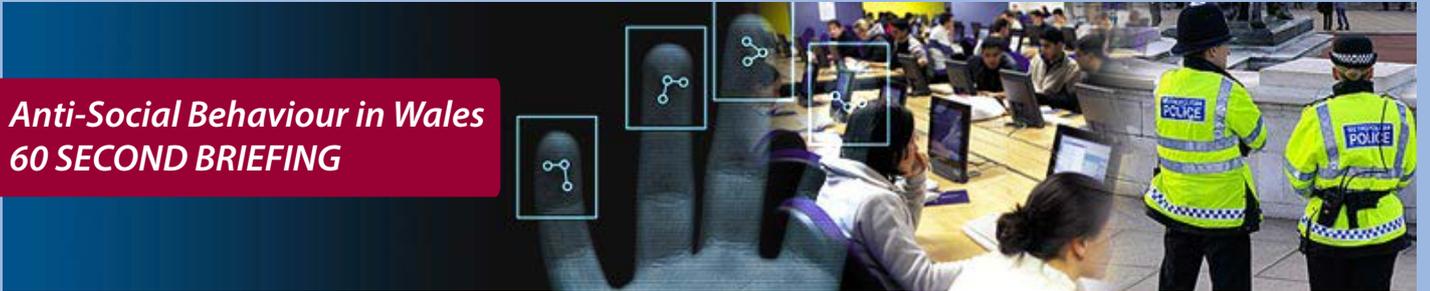


Anti-Social Behaviour in Wales 60 SECOND BRIEFING



WHAT'S THE KEY IDEA?

Antisocial behaviour or ASB is a widespread problem that is a top concern of the public. It can range from vandalism of public property to street drinking to disruptive acts directed at individuals or groups in our society.

Some victims are more at risk than others from the social harm that antisocial behaviour can have on people's quality of life and sense of wellbeing. Victims are especially vulnerable and at particularly high risk when their personal characteristics, living situation and the type of antisocial behaviour they're experiencing combines to amplify its impact and harm.

This was exemplified by the case of Fiona Pilkington and her daughter in 2007 where persistent antisocial behaviour against these vulnerable individuals was pernicious and because it was allowed to escalate, ended in tragic consequences.

Identifying vulnerable victims at the time they first report an incident of antisocial behaviour means that the police are better equipped to intervene in a more targeted, efficient and joined up way to prevent the issue escalating. This in turn will minimise the risk of harm and distress caused to individuals who are least able to withstand prolonged antisocial behaviour.

WHAT MAKES A VULNERABLE VICTIM?

Following reports by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in 2010 and 2012, the police have made progress in identifying repeat victims of antisocial behaviour and those who are vulnerable on the basis of their compromised health. However, using empirical data for an in-depth investigation of repeat and vulnerable victims in Wales allows us to extend and elaborate on this approach.

Three types of vulnerability are identified from an analysis of a sample survey of the public who called police forces in Wales over a one-month period in 2011. These are:

Situational Vulnerability refers to the wider socio-economic context in which people live, such as their housing or level of deprivation in their local area.

Personal Vulnerability refers to the characteristics of the victim themselves, such as their health status, age and gender that may make people more vulnerable to ASB harm.

Incidental Vulnerability refers to characteristics of the antisocial behaviour itself; its type, its focus, its duration or repeated incidence.

The prevalence and distribution of these different types of vulnerability varies across the four police forces in Wales.



Figure 1 illustrates that these three types of vulnerability do not exist in isolation from each other but interact. In doing so, the harmful effects of antisocial behaviour can be magnified. For example, local socio-economic deprivation increases the volume of ASB calls to the police and victims living in highly deprived areas are more likely to have personal vulnerability characteristics.

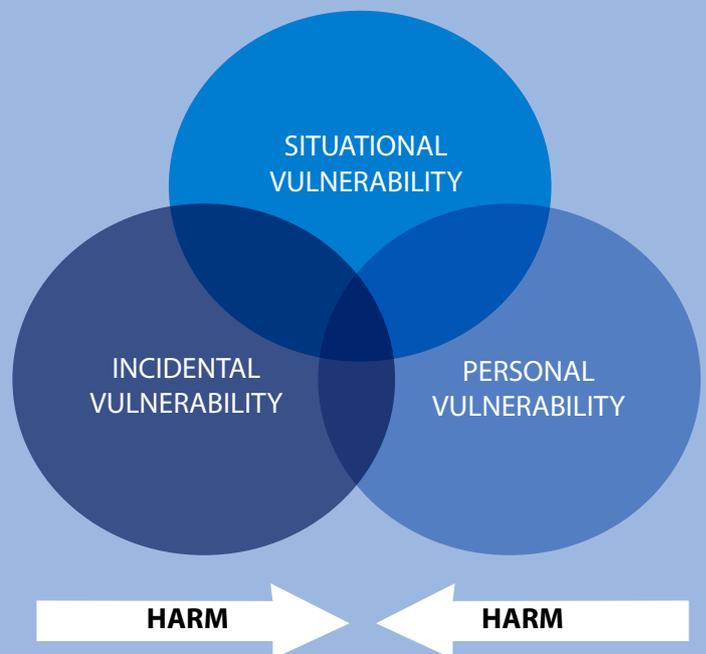


FIG 1. Victim Vulnerability, ASB & Social Harm

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Identifying and connecting different forms of vulnerability among callers to the police matters because:

1. Vulnerable victims in Wales were most likely to contact the police repeatedly for help, but these victims were least likely to be satisfied with their police response.
2. Around one third of people in Wales who reported antisocial behaviour to the police said that they experienced intimidation or repercussions as a result of doing so. This risk was amplified for vulnerable victims and those living in social housing. What happens to victims after they report to the police can therefore be critical in determining their overall risk of social harm. Good all-round protection for victims in the short or longer term is vital to retain their trust and confidence in reporting to police in the future.
3. In three out of the four Welsh forces, around one-quarter of ASB victims were contacting the police ten or more times a year. Many of these victims were also vulnerable on the basis of their health or their experience of antisocial behaviour being personally targeted at them, their families or a group they are a part of. Identifying and responding to these high frequency callers is one way that the police can act to have a sizeable impact on overall demand.

4. Vulnerability was concentrated among people in social housing and as such there exists an opportunity for police to share information with others, such as registered social landlords (RSLs), in order to provide a more joined up, cost-efficient, approach to intervention and ASB management.
5. Equally, however, two-thirds of people who contacted the police in Wales about antisocial behaviour owned their own home. These victims fall outside of a policy and practice focus on social housing and ASB in Wales and the police are more likely to represent their only avenue to report antisocial behaviour.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Read Full Report at: upsi.org.uk/asbwales

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e: upsi@cardiff.ac.uk