



Tackling public disorder

‘Tackling public order issues, with a particular focus on anti-social behaviour in all its forms.’

The focus of this priority is to respond to residents’ concerns and improve our role in tackling anti-social behaviour, noise nuisance, and alcohol related crime. These are all issues that people repeatedly tell us are important to improve their quality of life.

We already provide a whole range of services that contribute to making the city a safer place for us all to enjoy and we already work closely with the police and other agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour.

However, there is even more we can do:

- Improved co-ordination of our own services
- Work even closer with the police and other partners
- Operate response teams into the early hours of the morning or even later over the weekend

Why is this a priority?

Reports of anti-social behaviour around the city are on the increase, especially those fuelled by alcohol.

“We will ensure that local evening businesses play a full and responsible role in creating a vibrant, but safe night time economy.”

Between April 2009 and December 2009, 800 alcohol-related crimes were recorded in Lincoln. Overall, alcohol contributed to 43.6 per cent of all violent crime. During 2009, there were over 12,000 incidents of anti-social behaviour recorded by the police. In the same year, the Environmental Protection Team received over 430 complaints regarding noise alone.

Whilst tackling crime remains the responsibility of the police, alcohol is an underlying cause for overall crime (particularly violent crime) and we have a role in signposting those at risk to organisations who can provide help and support.

For all comparisons (alcohol related crime and alcohol related illness) Lincoln has the worst profile in the region. In 2008/09 there were 1,780 hospital admissions for alcohol related harm per 100,000, compared to the national average of 1,580.

Whilst there is some dispute over the way these figures are calculated for Lincoln, it still highlights that this issue must be tackled in the city.

Reducing crime is THE most important factor in making somewhere a nice place to live, that’s according to the responses recorded in the national Place Survey undertaken in Lincoln in 2008. Only 22 per cent of residents felt the police and City Council were effectively dealing with concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime.

In addition to these striking figures, we are already committed to the existing targets within the plans agreed with partners through the Local Area Agreement and Lincoln Sustainable Community Strategy to:

- Reduce the incidence of alcohol related harm and improving community safety
- Improve residents’ perceptions in relation to the effectiveness of tackling local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the City Council and police
- Have a specific focus on tackling the high concentration of alcohol related violent crime in the city centre



What are we aiming to achieve?

We will strive to:

- Extend the operating hours for enforcement-based services at times of the evening and night when they are needed most to maintain the quality of life for local people
- Provide a highly visible team of uniformed officers, to offer a fast response to complaints about noise and anti-social behaviour in residential areas. This will increase our effectiveness and reduce the level of repeat complaints about the same issues
- Improve co-ordination between those agencies with a responsibility to tackle public order issues. The council will fulfil its community leadership role in brokering joint responses to issues
- Have a concerted approach with partners to tackle alcohol related issues in the city centre

What do we already do?

We already provide a range of services that tackle public order and anti-social behaviour issues:

- A CCTV crime surveillance system with more than 140 cameras covering predominantly the city centre and other areas of Lincoln
- Urban Rangers who patrol parks and open spaces

- An anti-social behaviour team who work with 'at risk' local people to divert them away from anti-social behaviour and help them to resolve particular cases
- We investigate noise nuisance complaints in the city, from the playing of loud music and noise emanating from businesses to barking dogs and excessive noise in communal areas of council owned flats
- An animal warden who enforces dog fouling legislation and deals with stray animals
- Waste enforcement staff who tackle issues of illegal dumping of refuse
- The removal of abandoned vehicles from Lincoln's streets
- Licensing of taxis, entertainment venues, pubs and clubs

What else do we plan to do?

The key project here is to explore the feasibility of developing an integrated service to tackle a range of anti-social activities. Although these activities are not criminal in nature (that responsibility remains with Lincolnshire Police) they are persistent and have a significant impact on quality of life. During 2010/11 we will explore the potential to put in place a new, more focussed team of uniformed officers tackling anti-social behaviour, noise nuisance, other environmental based issues (such as

littering, dog fouling, abandoned cars, graffiti and fly tipping) and alcohol related issues. We will also assess the feasibility of extending cover through the evening and into the early hours of the morning. This will include assessing the option of having 24-hour cover for weekends when complaints are at their peak.

The service would tackle all of these issues and would enable the council to send officers to investigate complaints straight away, especially in the case of noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour. The service would not be a primary response service for criminal activity, but the officers would deal with a range of low-level activity either using the enforcement powers open to them, or by signposting or referring issues.

In addition, such a service would ensure action was taken across other council services as well, championing complainant issues into related services where required including licensing and tenancy enforcement.

With regards to the city centre we will work hard with the police to tackle drunk and rowdy behaviour. We will also use the full powers open to us as licensing authority to ensure that local evening economy businesses play a full and responsible role in creating a vibrant, but safe, night time economy.