The drivers of perceptions of anti-social behaviour

Simon Mackenzie, Jon Bannister, John Flint, Sadie Parr, Andrew Millie and Jennifer Fleetwood

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a confusing term which has been variously applied to a wide spectrum of activity, from serious criminal violence and persistent ongoing intimidation and harassment at one end of the spectrum, to subjective feelings of unease caused by relatively minor and perhaps occasional environmental disturbances, such as litter, at the other. In this report the authors analyse ASB in terms of the seven-strand definition used to measure perceptions in the British Crime Survey (BCS). This definition of ASB tends towards a focus on the less serious end of the ASB spectrum.

The report proposes that perceptions of ASB ('PASB'), in the technical BCS definition mentioned, are a matter of *interpretation*. There is frequently a mismatch between an objective measure of ASB, and perceptions. Based on a review of available research studies, the authors model two processes of interpretation that seem to be fundamental in driving this, and suggest that the reason why people make different *interpretations* of behaviour rests in social connectedness. Consequently, interventions that hold the potential to deliver long-lasting reductions in PASB are rooted in processes of engagement targeted at building empathy and mutual respect.

Interventions

Action to ameliorate PASB can be implemented at both local and national levels, focusing on both the physical environment and social dynamics of neighbourhoods. Promising intervention strategies include the following.

Shorter term, neighbourhood level

- **Public information strategies** such as ensuring residents are **fully informed** about local patterns of crime and disorder in ways which may mitigate fear and promote individuals' sense of control over risk in their neighbourhoods, and fostering **positive media relations** (e.g. between the local authority and local newspapers) to encourage the dissemination of 'success stories' in tackling ASB, and positive stories about young people, and to discourage 'scare stories' and the misrepresentation of isolated or unusual instances of ASB as commonplace.

- **Public reassurance initiatives** such as neighbourhood wardens and community policing can, when perceived to be supportive and legitimate, send 'control signals' that suggest to residents that 'something is being done' about their local problems, thus reducing fear.

Contents

Keywords

Anti-social behaviour

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- **Environmental interventions** work to reduce signs of neighbourhood physical decline in communities and can serve to reduce the likelihood that PASB will be equated with broader social decline.

Longer term, neighbourhood level

- Increasing **community cohesion and building trust** can diminish the tendency for people to operate with one-dimensional or stereotyped views of other people or groups, and increase mutual respect and empathy.

- Action can be taken to address **the concentration of socio-economic deprivation and crime problems within particular localities,** which help create the conditions for PASB (and ASB).

Shorter term, national level

- Policy should try to move away from subjective interpretations of what constitutes ASB (as enshrined in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act) towards a **greater prescription and definition**.

Longer term, national level

- Policy should attempt to address the **social and economic conditions** that are associated with ASB and PASB, more specifically deprivation, poor social integration and inequality, as these structural elements are key determinants of PASB.

- **Government action to reassure anxious publics**. PASB may be lowered through action designed to mitigate a range of social anxieties and insecurities which act as mediating mechanisms that lead to PASB. These measures should aim to improve the quality of community relations in the longer term.

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Aims and objectives

To identify and explain the key drivers of people's perceptions of anti-social behaviour. The British Crime Survey asks about perceptions of seven strands of ASB and the authors use these as the basis of their definition of ASB.

Method

A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA), reviewing the post-1995 English language published research literature identified through systematic database searching, combined with a thematic review of other known relevant literature and expert consultation. Sixty-one studies formed the core of the REA, supplemented by other materials. Quality review protocols were implemented to ensure the quality of the evidence. Some key studies relied on were not British; inferences drawn from these studies must consider cultural and other contextual differences. The evidence gathered through these methods was further developed by way of the production of a framework for understanding the drivers of perceptions of anti-social behaviour (PASB), and the identification of examples of policy approaches which are consistent with this framework.

Main findings

This report presents findings of a Rapid Evidence Assessment of the drivers of PASB. A number of findings hold implications for policy makers and practitioners attempting to address PASB and ASB.

Some studies have highlighted that certain demographic and other 'background' factors are correlated to higher PASB. Younger people, women, and those with prior victimisation experiences (both real and vicarious) are more likely to have high perceptions of ASB, as are those living in more deprived, and in densely populated areas, and where there are high levels of violent crime.

Other studies look beyond these factors, and suggest that PASB is a matter of *interpretation* by people in the locality. There is frequently a mismatch between the objective measurement of ASB and how residents perceive ASB. Based on the research studies in this REA, the authors model two processes of interpretation that seem to be fundamental in driving this.

- First, people utilise the observation of a particular phenomenon (e.g. teenagers hanging around) as a 'shorthand' way to judge the level of disorder in an area.
- Second, PASB is linked to deeper seated anxieties about the state of society in general, and qualities of the neighbourhood in particular.

The reason why people make different interpretations of behaviour rests in social connectedness. The connectedness of an individual to both other users of particular spaces and to particular types of ASB is important in their evaluation of whether that behaviour is problematic or not. In essence, the more we know of those we share space with (say a group of young people), the easier it becomes for us to assess whether they pose a threat to us. By implication, the greater the connectedness of an individual, the less likely they would be to interpret any given behaviour as problematic ASB.

This model of 'interpretation' provides a theoretical framework for the drivers of PASB through which policy makers may develop interventions aimed at reducing both PASB and ASB. This framework indicates two broad areas of intervention – firstly influencing the physical environment of a neighbourhood and secondly influencing the social relationships and interactions between individuals within this environment. These interventions are aimed at addressing both PASB and the actual indicators of ASB, and comprise both short-term interventions and longer-term strategies.

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Although the model presented in this report is based on the capacities of processes of social engagement to reduce PASB, it is important to note that ASB is a confusing term which has been variously applied to a wide spectrum of activity, from serious criminal violence at one end of the spectrum to subjective feelings of unease caused by relatively minor environmental disturbances such as litter at the other. In this report the authors do not address the more serious end of the ASB spectrum, but rather analyse ASB in terms of the seven-strand definition used to measure perceptions of it in the British Crime Survey. That definition does not include serious criminal violence, and the authors' findings apply only to 'lower-level' forms of ASB, in respect of which it is reasonable to suggest people may differ in their understandings and impressions. Almost all people would agree that the sort of serious criminal violence which is sometimes included in discussions of ASB is something that nobody should be expected to tolerate, and PASB does not present as an independent problem in relation to such crime. The BCS measure, on the other hand, defines and records ASB in terms of people's perceptions of it, and its seven strands of ASB are therefore clearly suited to a study which informs our understanding of their drivers in terms of the factors which raise or lower reported perceptions.

Interventions

The authors suggest some broad strategies that will improve PASB, and which warrant further research into their efficacy.

- **Shorter term, neighbourhood level:** public information strategies; public reassurance initiatives; and environmental interventions.
- **Longer term, neighbourhood level:** increasing community cohesion and building trust; and action to address the concentration of socio-economic deprivation and crime problems within particular localities.
- **Shorter term, national level:** development of a more prescriptive definition of ASB.
- **Longer term, national level:** attempts to address the social and economic conditions that are associated with ASB and PASB; and Government action to reassure the anxious public.

There is a continuing need for more research to improve our understanding of the connections between specific packages of interventions and improved PASB at the community and neighbourhood level. This is likely to require detailed case study work in localities where PASB has been improved. We need to understand the specific dynamics and drivers underpinning such improvements.

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1. Introduction

This report sets out the findings of a Rapid Evidence Assessment in relation to the drivers of 'perceptions of anti-social behaviour' (PASB). It incorporates the evidence contained in the literature found in the REA into an empirical and theoretical approach to understanding PASB that also draws on other knowledge. This is therefore a departure from the more restrictive format of a traditional REA. It results in the production of a framework for thinking about the drivers of PASB which can be used to inform promising interventions which aim to reduce PASB. The research was commissioned by the Home Office in terms of a specification which focused on two main research questions.

- What are the drivers of perceptions of ASB?
- How might we engage with these drivers so as to lower perceptions of ASB?

The legal definition of ASB is from the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act that saw, among other measures, the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO). According to the 1998 Act, in England and Wales a person is regarded as behaving anti-socially if they have acted:

> *... in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household* [as the perpetrator].
>
> (s. 1[1a])

The definition is open to interpretation.[1] ASB is restricted to '*persons not of the same household*' as the perpetrator. This is principally because domestic incidents were already covered in law, for instance through the 1996 Family Law Act. The result is that ASB is something that happens in public rather than domestic space. ASB equates to '*harassment, alarm or distress*'. The phrase 'harassment, alarm or distress' originated in the 1986 Public Order Act and its inclusion therefore allows for legislative consistency; yet it is here that the subjectivity of ASB becomes apparent. Without belittling the real and serious consequences that persistent ASB can have on individuals and neighbourhoods, what causes one person harassment, alarm or distress can be quite different to someone else. This may be linked to levels of perceived (as well as actual) harm or offence caused to the victim (Von Hirsch and Simester, 2006); it may have something to do with expectations for the look and feel of public spaces (Millie, 2008); or it could be associated with public expectations of civility and respect (Respect Task Force, 2006; Flint and Powell, 2009; Millie, 2009b). Central to understandings and experiences of ASB is public perception. It is behaviour that '*caused or was likely to cause*' such concerns. By including behaviour '*likely to cause*' problems, the emphasis is on subjective interpretation of others' behaviours, and of how people may react to these behaviours; as Squires (2008: 368) has noted, "Anti-social behaviour is emphatically about perceptions, relationships and interactions and contexts. It is important for what it signals". The types of behaviour usually included are:

- interpersonal/malicious ASB (e.g. hoax calls, vandalism directed at individuals or groups, forms of intimidation);
- environmental ASB (e.g. litter, graffiti, fly-tipping, noise nuisance);
- ASB that restricts access to shared public spaces (e.g. intimidating behaviour by groups of youths, drug use/dealing in public, rowdy street drinking) (Millie *et al.*, 2005).

The official measure for PASB is based on an amalgamation of seven strands of behaviour as recorded by the British Crime Survey (the percentage saying that each is a very/fairly big problem in their area). None of the seven are specifically related to interpersonal or malicious ASB.

1 (e.g. Ashworth *et al.*, 1998; Harradine *et al.*, 2004; Ramsay, 2004; Burney, 2005; Millie, 2009a)

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Instead, all relate to environmental ASB, or ASB restricting access to public spaces. The seven strands are listed below by the 'type' of ASB.

Environmental ASB

1. Abandoned or burnt-out cars
2. Noisy neighbours or loud parties
3. Rubbish or litter lying around
4. Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property

ASB restricting access to public spaces

5. People being drunk or rowdy in public places
6. People using or dealing drugs
7. Teenagers hanging around on the streets

Six of the seven refer to actual behaviours, or at least the consequences of those behaviours - for instance, dumping of cars, being a noisy neighbour, dropping litter, vandalism, being drunk or rowdy, or using or dealing in drugs. The seventh strand is more problematical as it refers to presence rather than behaviour – that 'teenagers hanging around on the streets' can be interpreted as anti-social. Of course, this is not always the case. Overall, this is a disparate group of behaviours (and presence) including both illegal and legal actions. What they have in common is a socially constructed notion of being anti-social, that they can have a corrosive effect on individuals or neighbourhoods. Whatever the specific behaviours, it seems to be their persistence that causes harassment, alarm or distress, and it is this repetition that makes them anti-social (Campbell, 2002; Millie *et al.*, 2005; Bottoms, 2006).

ASB is a term which is popularly (and unhelpfully) applied to a wide spectrum of activity, from serious criminal violence at one end of the spectrum to subjective feelings of unease caused by relatively minor environmental disturbances such as litter at the other. We have seen that while each of these ends of the spectrum may be accommodated by the rather open-ended legal definition of ASB, the more serious criminality which would be included under the 'interpersonal and malicious' heading above does not form part of the BCS's definition in terms of its seven strand index. In this report we do not address the more serious end of the ASB spectrum, but rather analyse ASB in terms of the seven-strand definition used to measure perceptions of it in the British Crime Survey. It is important to note that our findings and suggestions apply only to 'lower-level' forms of ASB, in respect of which it is reasonable to suggest people may differ in their understandings and impressions. Almost all people would agree that the sort of serious criminal violence which is sometimes included in discussions of ASB is something that nobody should be expected to tolerate.

For the avoidance of doubt, the policy implications of this report, which revolve around the benefits of processes of social engagement, are targeted to reduce PASB in the sense that these are sometimes misreadings of social signs, and are not suggested to be appropriate or applicable in relation to supporting victims of serious violence or other crime.

Where objective measures of BCS-defined ASB are possible, such as for some of the environmental strands, PASB has been found in a recent US study to be a problem that is not as dependent on the objective measure of ASB as we might assume. That is, reduction in objective levels of that type of ASB does not necessarily lead to reduction in reported PASB. And where the line between objective ASB and subjective perceptions is not so clear cut, such as for some of the other ASB strands (perhaps especially teenagers hanging around), we can infer that reducing the objective indicators of ASB may not lead to correlated reductions in PASB. So for all the ASB which forms the subject of this report, perceptions remain an important, and in many respects independent, problem.

The methodology used to locate and review the literature in this study is set out in the appendix. In order to include international literature we had to use various terms for the types of behaviour represented in the UK by the term ASB (and PASB). The most notable of these are 'disorder' in the US, and the concept of 'incivilities' which is more widely used. Whether disorder or incivility bears the same meaning as ASB is not a question we entertain at any length here (there are clearly points of similarity in the behaviour covered and also perhaps points of difference). We simply note that the approach we have taken is to use the terms native to the research studies we review. Where we extrapolate findings into hypotheses about ASB and PASB in the UK context, the change of language will assist in identifying these extensions.

2. A review of the literature on the drivers of PASB

In this section we review the literature and then summarise the policy implications. We return to these policy implications towards the end of the report, to develop them into recommendations for effective interventions.

The drivers of PASB have been split into two categories for the purposes of analysis. These are:

1. the findings from key quantitative studies of PASB – these consist mainly of demographic and what we have called other 'background' factors;

2. the findings from other research which help us understand the context underpinning the correlations observed in the key quantitative studies.

Quantitative analysis of PASB

Demographic and other 'background' factors

The British Crime Survey has asked questions about PASB since 2001/02. An overview of the trends in PASB generated by the BCS is available in Flatley *et al.* (2008: 20). Here we simply note that a variety of trends has been apparent among the various strands of ASB: slight declines in PASB from 2001 to 2008 on the vandalism and graffiti, drugs, and rubbish measures; approximate stability on the teenagers and noise measures; a slight rise on the drunk and rowdy measure; and a significant decline on the abandoned car measure. Overall the trend is a modest decline in the overall headline measure of PASB.

Analysis of the BCS has found that PASB is driven by personal, household and area characteristics as well as the direct and indirect experience of crime and ASB. These factors can be summarised as follows.

Personal

Younger respondents, women, ethnic minorities, the unemployed and those who were ill were more likely to perceive problems of ASB, as were victims of crime and those who read tabloids.

Household

High levels of PASB were more likely among households comprising a single adult and child(ren) than for other household types. Those living in social-rented housing and those with lower incomes were also more likely to perceive problems of ASB.

Area

Respondents living in areas with higher levels of deprivation were more likely to perceive problems of ASB, as were those living in areas with 'low' levels of community cohesion.

Experience

Indirect or vicarious experiences of ASB (including information drawn from the experience of others, the national and local media, and information from the police or other authorities) were seen to influence PASB. Nevertheless, direct or personal experiences held the strongest influence on people's perception of ASB. It is worth noting, however, that there were significant differences in the strength of this relationship according to the particular strand of ASB. Thus, 96 per cent of people who perceived problems with teenagers hanging around had personally seen or heard this behaviour in their area in the previous 12 months, whereas only 48 per cent of people who perceived problems with people using or dealing drugs in their local area had personally seen evidence of this behaviour in their area in the previous 12 months. As well as people who think that a strand of ASB is a problem in their area without having personally experienced it, there are also significant numbers of people who *do not* think that a strand of ASB is a problem in their area *despite* having experienced it. In her analysis of the 2004/05 BCS, Upson reports this to be most common in respect of young people hanging around, in which 53 per cent of people who had seen this in their area did not think it problematic. Of those who had seen or heard people being drunk or rowdy in their area, 35 per cent did not think this problematic. Only seven per cent of people who had seen drug use or dealing did not think it problematic (Upson, 2006).

Recognising that the characteristics associated with the perception of a problem of ASB are often inter-related, Flatley *et al.* (2008) undertook multivariate analysis (of English BCS data only) to assess which characteristics were independently associated with having high levels of PASB. Overall, the model predicted around 26 per cent of the variance in levels of PASB. The factors most strongly independently associated with high levels of PASB were:

- the level of deprivation, in particular living in the most deprived wards;
- low levels of community cohesion (disagreeing that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together);
- being a victim of crime in the previous 12 months;
- not living in northern regions of England;
- age, that is, being less than 65; and
- living in an area for three years or more.

This exercise was replicated for the individual strands of ASB. Area-based characteristics (level of deprivation and ACORN category) were those that were most strongly related to each of the seven strands. Whilst community cohesion (or informal social control) was entered in the multivariate analysis, data pertaining to public confidence in local agencies dealing with ASB (aspects of formal social control) was not. It would be interesting to probe the potential import of this variable in a multivariate analysis of PASB using BCS data. Certainly, Myhill and Beak (2008) and Thorpe (2009), utilising BCS data, identify an association between the PASB and confidence in the efficacy of the police (and local councils) in dealing with 'crime and ASB issues that matter in the area'. PASB tends to be lower when confidence in the police rises.

The perception of ASB is clearly an on-going experience and, as a consequence, may well vary through time and according to the precise location and context in which a particular behaviour is experienced. Quantitative survey tools attempt to convert such processes into a quantifiable moment and, as a result, are unlikely to capture the range and strengths of perceptions an individual might experience. There is also a range of ways in which a particular behaviour might be regarded as problematic by a respondent. There is a clear distinction to be drawn between individuals perceiving incidents to occur and these incidents being regarded as problematic. Therefore it matters a great deal whether surveys ask whether incidents are 'common' or whether they are 'a problem'. Individuals may not define an incident as 'anti-social behaviour' or may regard it as too unproblematic or trivial to warrant a complaint (Casey and Flint, 2007). Perception of ASB in a comparative context is also important. As Allen (2008: 109) points out, residents may not regard ASB as particularly or specifically problematic if they consider it to be a 'natural' phenomenon of neighbourhood living, as a 'fact of life', and that incidents of ASB are the same 'everywhere else'. Conversely, residents may report their lives 'being ruined' by ASB despite the fact that this ASB is comparatively minor or infrequent (Atkinson and Flint, 2003).

Other quantitative studies of the relationship between demographic and other background factors and PASB broadly tend to accord with the BCS findings (McAuley and MacDonald, 2007; Benedict *et al.*, 2000; Austin and Sanders, 2007; Millie, 2007). On the individual level, people who are more affluent and mobile, and therefore less bound to the fate of their area of current residence, tend to have lower PASB. They may observe the same levels of actual indicators of ASB in their neighbourhoods, but these indicators trouble them less as they always have the option to move out (Girling *et al.*, 2000; and see the discussion of Carvalho and Lewis 2006 below).

A recent report by Ipsos MORI uses the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) General User Survey to identify a group of demographic factors which predict PASB in an area (Ames *et al.*, (2007). These are:

- level of deprivation – the more deprived the area, the higher the PASB;
- population density – the more densely populated an area, the higher the PASB;
- net population outflow – areas with higher numbers of people leaving than entering report higher PASB;
- recorded level of violent crime – areas with a higher number of recorded offences for violence against the person have higher PASB;
- proportion of residents aged 25 years and under – both men and women aged from 16 to 24 are likely to have higher PASB than any other age group.

The authors found the model represented by these five factors predicted 58 per cent of the variance in PASB across the 387 local authority areas included in the BVPI survey. Local deprivation as measured on the Index of Multiple Deprivation Score is the strongest predictor among the five factors. Although this research reveals variations, it does not fully capture the extent and reasons for the considerable variations in PASB at the neighbourhood level, and, in particular, variation between neighbourhoods that are apparently similar. The present report looks at a range of research studies that can inform these questions.

Differences between neighbourhoods

A national study of eight deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland (Flint *et al.*, 2007b), based on a household survey of 200 residents in each neighbourhood, revealed significant variation in the PASB within them. This was illustrated by the proportion of residents in one neighbourhood (57%) reporting drug-related ASB problems as 'common', being 14 times higher than another neighbourhood (4%). Similarly, a study based on large-scale survey evidence in Glasgow revealed considerable variation in PASB as a problem between different social housing areas in the city (Flint *et al.*, 2007a). For example, the proportions of respondents reporting vandalism as a problem ranged from three to fifty-nine per cent.

The national study of eight neighbourhoods in Scotland (Flint *et al.*, 2007b) utilised adjusted odds ratios analysis to reveal a significant 'neighbourhood effect' whereby the localised patterns of PASB could not be explained merely by the characteristics of the population of the neighbourhood. This neighbourhood effect resulted in both some neighbourhoods having significantly higher levels of PASB than would be anticipated and other neighbourhoods having considerably lower levels of PASB than may have been expected. Adjusted odds ratios analysis further found a neighbourhood effect in residents' perceptions of whether ASB problems had improved in their locality (Flint *et al.*, 2007b). A similar neighbourhood effect influencing personal experience of ASB was also evident in the Glasgow study (Flint *et al.*, 2007a) with the patterns of levels of individuals with direct experience of ASB not being entirely explained by their personal characteristics. Innes and Jones (2006) also found that perceptions of neighbourhood safety could differ significantly between separate ethnic communities living in close proximity to each other, even though their economic and demographic characteristics were similar. These research studies suggest that PASB is strongly influenced by social dynamics and community relations in localities which cannot entirely be attributed to the social-demographic profile of a neighbourhood.

Innes and Jones (2006) used research in four wards in England involved in the National Reassurance Policing Programme to develop a useful three-part classification of community responses to ASB:

1. **Risk factors:** they argued perceptions of disorder and crime were as important as actual disorder and crime rates in generating neighbourhood decline. These factors included 'signal crimes' which had a 'particularly potent' impact upon local perceptions of neighbourhood security and levels of safety, and the actions of the police and other agencies which in some cases could amplify rather than ameliorate residents' perceptions of ASB and crime problems.

2. **Resilience factors:** some communities were able to 'withstand and mitigate' the risks and threats arising from ASB and crime. These factors included the particular distribution of economic and social capital within neighbourhoods, the levels of social cohesion in a neighbourhood and the capacity of groups of people to work together to utilise informal social control mechanisms to challenge ASB (in other words to use what is termed 'collective efficacy').

3. **Recovery factors:** these 'promote and propagate' actual and perceived levels of neighbourhood safety. They included effective policing that provided a basic level of security, giving communities a voice in strategies and actions to address ASB, and establishing 'control signals' such as environmental improvements, the management and maintenance of public spaces and encouraging a social mix in the use of these public spaces. However, Innes and Jones also argued that localised neighbourhood security measures had to be combined with wider action to address the structural causes of ASB and PASB.

Differences within neighbourhoods

A focus on neighbourhood-level analysis, however, fails to capture the fact that perceptions of ASB are often based on a very localised geography of a street or block of flats and that PASB varies at block or street levels. Sub-neighbourhood statistics from Glasgow reveal hotspots of perceptions, linked to housing type. Residents in inter- and post-war tenements, deck-access and multi-storey flats are much more likely to perceive serious ASB problems (Flint *et al.*, 2007a). Similarly, the nature of relations with their immediate neighbours may often be used by individuals as a proxy for the levels of ASB and nature of social relations across a neighbourhood.

PASB therefore varies considerably at individual levels in the same neighbourhood, with residents living in the same street referring to it on a spectrum from 'a lovely place to live' to 'a war zone' (Atkinson and Flint, 2003). It is important to note that this variation is evident in different subgroups of the population. Therefore, some young people will regard a group of other young people as 'their mates' whilst other young people may well be intimated or threatened by this presence.

Perceptions are strongly affected by the length of residence and perceived position of individuals in the social relations within their neighbourhood. 'Being known' or 'having grown up with these people' is an important dimension in the perceived level of personal threat individuals read into incidents of ASB , as demonstrated in resident surveys (Atkinson and Flint, 2003). This confirms the findings from survey evidence in the US that residential stability is a more significant determinant of responses to disorder than class (Taylor, 1996). It also supports the argument we develop in this report that social connectedness is key to understanding the different interpretations of observed social and environmental variables which create PASB.

McCord *et al.* (2007), in a US study, acknowledged that perceptions of incivilities vary within neighbourhoods, and sought to measure and account for these variations. Exploring a theory based on Brantingham and Brantingham's (1984) concept of 'awareness space', they found that the closer a person lives to a 'crime-relevant' non-residential land use site, the higher their perceptions of neighbourhood incivilities are. McCord *et al.*, see crime-relevant land use as falling into two types: crime generators and crime attractors. The crime generators the study used were high schools, subway stops and expressway off-ramps – areas which brought large numbers of people together thereby 'generating' opportunities for incivility as well as crime. The crime attractors the study used were pawnbrokers, 'check-cashing stores', drug treatment centres, halfway houses, homeless shelters, 'beer establishments and liquor clubs' – places thought to 'attract' criminals, being part of their routines. Those living closer to the crime generating or crime attracting land uses than their neighbours saw their neighbourhood as more problem ridden (in terms of both crime and incivilities/disorder) irrespective of other demographic factors like who they were, or the racial composition, stability or crime rate of the area. The effect on perceptions was roughly of similar strength for crime generating and crime attracting land uses. McCord *et al.*, also found that those reporting higher household income reported lower perceptions of incivilities, supporting the relationship observed in other studies between hard-pressed neighbourhoods and high PASB.

The disjuncture between PASB and objective indicators of ASB: a question of interpretation

While PASB depends to a certain extent on observable levels of ASB in an area, it also depends on people's interpretations of these things or events. The authors examine here the factors informing people's interpretations of what they see, or hear about, in relation to ASB. They then go on to examine the role social connectedness plays in setting the context for these processes of interpretation. It should be noted that the evidence for a mismatch between PASB and ASB is primarily North American (and more specifically from Chicago). In order to make the case for such a mismatch, researchers need to have measures of reported PASB (which we have in the UK in the form of the BCS) and also design ways to compare reported PASB to the observable objective indicators of ASB in the neighbourhoods where the people who are reporting the PASB live. This second stage – systematically measuring ASB in order to test whether it is lower or higher than locally reported PASB – has only recently been done in the US (Sampson 2009), and the authors did not find any UK studies where it has been done. So their interpretation of the US evidence as it might apply to the UK context, and indeed the various local sub-contexts around the UK, can only be somewhat speculative.

Media and interpretation

First among many factors driving current public interpretations of behaviour are the media. The media encourage people to see things in certain ways. There is a large literature on the effects of media consumption on a range of factors, including fear of crime, perceptions of risk, racialised perceptions of criminal defendants, punitive attitudes and perceptions of crime rates.[2] No such studies were found which measured the effects of the media on PASB, or perceptions of disorder or incivility. Some of the findings of the effects of the media on crime-related perceptions appear to have likely implications for thinking about PASB, but we do not review this literature in depth here. By way of example, studies have found TV viewing to be 'associated with misperceptions that juvenile (and adult) crime is increasing when, in fact, it is decreasing' (Goidel *et al.*, 2006: 134; Pfeiffer *et al.*, 2005; Perrone and Chesney-Lind, 1998). A range of TV shows has been implicated in these processes of the production of misperception, including news programmes (Goidel *et al.*, 2006; Dixon, 2008). Which newspaper a reader takes has been found to correlate to fear of crime, although generally the press, and indeed the media across the board, are thought to distort perceptions through a tendency to highlight extreme cases of criminality and incivility, leading viewers/readers/listeners to believe that such unusual cases are closer to the norm than in fact they are (O'Connell, 1999).

Stereotype and interpretation

Sampson's recent study (2009) is instructive in relation to the stereotypes which correlate to increased PASB – stereotypes which are undoubtedly the product of socialisation processes that lead them to be widely held and deeply ingrained. In the US, Sampson found that the racial composition of an area (per cent Black people) was three times more likely to predict higher perceptions of disorder in it than the 'real' level of disorder, measured using trained researchers who visit the neighbourhoods and record what objective indicators they see. Prior initial

2 (e.g. Heath and Gilbert, 1996; O'Connell and Whelan, 1996; Perrone and Chesney-Lind, 1998; Shrum 1998; Valkenburg and Patiwael, 1998; O'Connell, 1999; Tulloch, 1999; Welch *et al.*, 2002; Biressi and Nunn, 2003; Wyn, 2005; Pfeiffer *et al.*, 2005; Goidel *et al.*, 2006; Doyle, 2006; Antunes, 2006; Esbensen and Tusinski, 2007; Reiner, 2007; Dixon, 2008).

research into this 'stereotype' driver of perceptions found the mechanism to function for both insiders and outsiders to the communities studied (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004). The people in Sampson's survey samples were using observations about the racial composition of an area as a 'shorthand' way to make judgements about the levels of disorder in an area.

Sampson's point is, therefore, a departure from the idea that ASB is perceived and then reported as a problem, with possible 'correspondence errors' relating to the observers' estimation of the problem. Rather, sometimes what is being perceived is not ASB at all, but some other variable. The correspondence error does not lie in the production of a certain level of PASB from a certain level of observed ASB, with inevitable over- or under-estimations of the extent of the problem. The error lies in the production of a certain level of PASB from the observation of a certain level of *another variable*, operating as a substitute for observed ASB (in the case of Sampson's 2009 research, race).

This leads to the suggestion that PASB might be lowered by engaging with this 'surrogate' variable. Sampson suggests neighbourhood racial heterogeneity as a way to reduce perceptions of disorder in the US case – areas with mixed ethnic groups would disrupt the processes which give rise to higher perceptions of disorder in predominantly Black neighbourhoods. For the UK, identifying and engaging with similar surrogate perceptual variables, or cultural stereotypes, may lower PASB. As well as accepting the operation of a surrogate variable, and trying to mitigate its effects, we might also consider engaging directly with the process or system of categorisation the variable represents. This might take the form of promoting greater understanding of local young people through increasing levels of community engagement. We pursue this idea further in our development of theoretical and policy implications in the next section.

In addition to demonstrating that people use cultural systems of classification of the people they observe to make assumptions about the level of disorder in an area, Sampson also shows three things. First, this way of seeing the world is not just racism; he found that Black people make similar projections of levels of disorder to White people where they live on the same block. Second, perceptions of neighbourhood disorder are surprisingly persistent. Shared perceptions of disorder in an area were found to predict an individual's perceptions of disorder in that area when those individuals were consulted seven years later. At the seven-year mark, people reported high perceptions of disorder in respect of areas where the actual rate of disorder had dropped significantly; their individual perceptions at this point bore more relation to their original exposure to collective perceptions of high disorder in the area seven years earlier than to the actual rate of disorder as it now was. This finding draws attention to 'the sensitivity of humans to the evaluations of others' (Sampson, 2009: 20), or in other words the collective social dimension of the problem of PASB which may weigh against the effectiveness of interventions targeted only at perceptions at the level of the individual. Third, socially perceived disorder predicts later adverse neighbourhood-level outcomes. These neighbourhoods develop bad reputations; people who can afford to leave the area move out, and the result is a 'poverty trap' effect that concentrates deprivation in the area, along with associated crime and ASB. Shared perceptions of disorder were 'as strong if not stronger in predicting later poverty than population composition by race and even prior poverty itself', and 'systematically observed disorder [i.e. 'real' levels of disorder] had *no independent association with later poverty*' (Sampson, 2009: 22, his emphasis).

We must bear in mind that these are US findings. It seems unlikely that race functions as a perceptual substitute for ASB in the UK in the same way as it does for disorder in Chicago, but at the same time it seems likely that the propensity to use stereotypes as surrogates for disorder is not something peculiar to US citizens. In that case, further research is needed to investigate the stereotypes that are used in the UK to make judgements about levels of crime and ASB in areas. The presence of notable numbers of young people in an area seems to be something to which the public in the UK has an unusually delicate sensitivity, and while it is one of the seven strands of ASB used in the BCS, it would probably be more accurate to see it as a shorthand stereotype used as a substitute for levels of neighbourhood disorder. Similarly, it seems likely that UK area stereotypes would involve assessments of housing type. While we find the research studies reviewed to be suggestive of these possible stereotyping processes in the UK context, we cannot be firmer without further research.

A subset of the idea that people are culturally conditioned to associate certain social markers as indicative of criminality or disorder, and therefore will have higher PASB in relation to areas where those social markers are more prevalent, is a process called 'ecological contamination' (Werthman and Piliavin, 1967; related to the concept of ecological fallacy - Robinson, 1950). Here, perceptions of neighbourhood qualities tend to imbue individual persons within those areas with those qualities. Thus, for example, young people in areas with higher PASB will be more likely

to be seen as problematic by residents whether or not they are actually involved in ASB (cf. Kuntsche and Kuendig, 2005).

Metaphor and interpretation

This strand of interpretive driver of PASB is suggested by studies that find ASB to be a social metaphor for some other type of harm, wrong, or social breakdown. In other words, when survey respondents are answering BCS questions on whether certain types of ASB are a 'problem', or more generally when people complain about or are fearful of ASB, they are not necessarily focusing in their minds on the actual manifestation of the behaviour they are complaining about. Rather, ASB is seen as problematic in some circumstances and by some people insofar as it is taken to be an indicator of social breakdown, poor formal or informal social control, or some other indicator of community fragmentation or moral decline. Disorder, or ASB, therefore provides 'evidence of a deeper neighbourhood malaise' (Sampson, 2009: 9; Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004).

Although the focus and measurement of PASB is usually the neighbourhood or local authority level, it is important to reflect upon the wider national and international drivers of social change and the perceptions of this change which provide the context for individuals' understanding and interpretation of social relations and incidents occurring in their neighbourhoods. Minton (2008) cites a range of international evidence that greater levels of fear and distrust arise in unequal societies which are linked to increasing polarisation and a growing desire amongst individuals to 'surround oneself only with groups similar to oneself' (Minton, 2008: 1; see also Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009). These arguments suggest that any form of differentiation of lifestyles will be perceived as problematic and that individuals will seek insulation from conflict rather than negotiating levels of tolerance and understanding. PASB is also linked to wider concerns about the state of society, including parenting and schooling and a general 'loss of respect' (Hayton and Shaw, 2008). These concerns tie PASB, and particularly the conduct of young people, into wider narratives of 'social disparagement' which are detrimental to social solidarity and generate negative views of individuals on the basis of their membership of certain population groups (young people, council house tenants) rather than their actual behaviour or personal worth (Titmuss, 1950; Minton, 2008). One can see, therefore, that the processes of stereotyping and metaphor are overlapping and mutually reinforcing within an overarching analysis of the ways in which people interpret things they observe or hear about.

The metaphor idea can help us to make sense of several observed responses to ASB. Among these are the surprising data on perceptions of drug dealing – one of the seven strands. Payne and Gainey (2007) found that while victimisation increases perceptions of neighbourhood disorder, it does not do so as much as being approached by a drug dealer. This is surprising as one might have expected direct victimisation experiences to be a more powerful predictor of perceptions of neighbourhood disorder than being approached by a drug dealer which, while it may send a signal about neighbourhood decline, does not involve direct personal victimisation. Drugs and the activities of young people might be thought to be two strands of ASB that are especially susceptible to interpretation as a metaphor for neighbourhood or social decline.

ASB as a metaphor for wider or more serious social problems raises the question of whether this perception is ever accurate. In some cases it may be. Consider, for example, Wikström's comment on Sampson's 2009 paper (already mentioned) that in some neighbourhoods 'young people hanging around' might empirically be associated with higher incidences of violence than in others (Wikström, 2009). It may, therefore, be perfectly rational for PASB in one area to be higher than PASB in another based on the same level of objective 'disorder' since PASB (as measured by the BCS as well as more generally) involves a judgement as to how much of a problem a certain observed level of ASB is. In areas where residents have experience of young people hanging around leading to violence we can understand why they might be more concerned about that indicator of ASB than residents where the indicator is not related to the same victimisation experiences.

More generally, however, Ditton and Chadee (2006) have found that people's perceptions of their risk of future victimisation tend not to be at all accurate; rather they are often inflated. People use 'lay heuristics', or, in other words, judgements based on conventional wisdom (which is often incorrect), to form opinions about risk, and among these are observed levels of crime in their neighbourhood. These findings support the idea that observed ASB might be used by some people as an indicator of risk of future criminal victimisation in the area, which would inflate their reported levels of PASB. Rountree and Land make a similar point in their US study, but include high levels of perceptions of local 'disorganisation' (a term referring here to perceptions of local incivilities) along with perceptions of crime among the 'contextual indicators of ambient risk' that they suggest raise people's impression of area levels of crime (Rountree and Land, 1996).

Observations of the correlation of perceived powerlessness with higher PASB (Geis and Ross, 1998; Ross *et al.*, 2000; Millie *et al.*, 2005; Christie-Mizell and Erickson, 2007) also support the idea that PASB is linked to contemporary anxieties involving feelings of loss of control, whereby the environment becomes a substitute for feelings of insecurity over life trajectories and feelings of belonging. There is a common view amongst residents within research studies that ASB is an externally generated problem arising from 'outsiders' using neighbourhoods or being allocated housing within them. Therefore, a sense of powerlessness or lack of ownership of the nature of the local population is translated into a wider sense of powerlessness in relation to ASB (Atkinson and Flint, 2003). Another correlate of PASB, or perceptions of disorder or incivility, is perceived neighbourhood cohesion (Innes and Jones, 2006; Sampson, 2009). Both of these concepts – feelings of powerlessness and low perceptions of community cohesion – can be related to individual perceptions of locally relevant 'control signals' (Innes, 2004). Control signals include evidence of official crime detection, prevention, reduction, or law enforcement activity. Control signals can reduce the anxiety that ASB is an indicator of the breakdown of control or the abandonment of an area by officials. Provided they are symbolic of actual, legitimate control of local crime and ASB (Crawford, 2009; Tyler and Fagan, 2008) rather than failed, failing, or illegitimate controls, control signals may support the lowering of PASB even in areas which have high crime rates (Taub *et al.*, 1984; Smithson and Flint, 2006; Bottoms, 2009).

While some citizens appear to read much into the visible indicators of ASB, ethnographic work with young people has found them feeling confused about exactly what ASB is, and how they could avoid getting into trouble for it. In Goldsmith's three-year study of young people and ASB on a housing estate in the south of England, the types of behaviour the youths had seen generate intervention were seen as 'part of growing up' and important to their lives, friendships and social networks – for example being outside with friends, chatting, and socialising (Goldsmith, 2008). They claimed to not really understand that some adults perceived these activities as anti-social. Goldsmith found that, in contrast to an assumption derived from official statistics, the estate did not have a problem with adult offending; the young people interviewed were found to be experiencing difficult situations associated with problematic adult behaviour, e.g. domestic violence, getting caught up in arguments among families, and the effects of drug/alcohol abuse. As such, Goldsmith suggests that this "apparent contradiction always raised questions about the extent to which young people acted as a diversion for wider socio-economic uncertainties experienced by some residents, and were an 'easy target' for those involved in ASB management on the estate" (2008: 229). The result was that interventions based on adult PASB and targeted against young people on the estate generated considerable resentment and resistance by the young people. Comparable findings are presented in the research literature on dispersal orders, drawing attention to the importance of respect and procedural justice, including perceptions of proportionality, in determining young people's responses to directions to disperse – perceived unfair or heavy-handed interventions have been observed to increase police-youth antagonism (Crawford, 2009; see also Smithson, 2004; Crawford and Lister, 2007; Crawford, 2007).

Stereotype and metaphor as two strands of a process of interpretation

The literature reviewed suggests that a central feature of the problem of PASB is the different ways people can interpret things they see or hear about. We have suggested here that among the important processes involved in interpretation are two mechanisms, which we have called stereotype and metaphor. While both are processes of interpretation, these two strands operate in slightly different ways. On the one hand, processes of stereotype operate as ways through which people 'learn to see' ASB. On the other hand, processes of metaphor affect the meaning – subjective and collective – generated by seeing ASB. To reiterate the way we would phrase these different aspects of interpretation, see below.

- **Stereotype:** some observed social variable is a symbol of ASB and therefore plays a role in generating PASB

- **Metaphor:** ASB is a symbol of some other social variable(s) and therefore plays a role in generating PASB.

In both cases we can see that there are other social variables besides ASB which are implicated in generating PASB. If PASB depends in some degree on how observed social facts are interpreted by the public, the question 'what drives PASB?' becomes 'what drives these interpretations?'

Carvahlo and Lewis (2006) suggested in their study of Chicago residents, that local problems can become part of the neighbourhood routine and of one's life, losing their potential to scare. In addition to this 'ordinariness', a process of 'delimitation' reinforces feelings of safety. This occurs on the basis of an understanding of the ways in which crime/incivilities function. With this process, dangers lose their random character (the seeming potential to affect just

anyone) and become restricted to certain places of the neighbourhood and times of the day, or to groups of people. They may, therefore, be perceived by residents as more manageable or avoidable. Carvahlo and Lewis also found that a capacity to resist the temptation to 'essentialise' other individuals, for example by thinking of them only as disorderly or threatening, is a characteristic of people who report lower PASB. Engagement with other people helps to contextualise elements of their behaviour which are anti-social. The study also found that respondents' anxieties seemed to be relatively diffuse or formless. They seemed independent of neighbourhood conditions, although they presented themselves in the language of concern about aspects of those neighbourhood conditions.

Findings such as these support both of the 'interpretation' hypotheses, and suggest that as well as attending to ASB and physical and social neighbourhood disorder, effective engagement with PASB requires solutions that take seriously the wider social context of somewhat amorphous fears and anxieties which can lead to higher reporting of community safety-related concerns, but which can also explain (by their absence) the lower reporting of such concerns in areas with relatively high levels of 'actual' ASB.

3. A theoretical context for the interpretation of drivers of PASB

Some elements of contemporary social theory can, we think, help us to contextualise the evidence from the REA. We will briefly run through some important aspects. The research of Carvahlo and Lewis (2006), mentioned above, highlights the importance of the connectedness of an individual to both other users of a particular space and to particular ASBs, in their evaluation of whether that behaviour is problematic or not. By implication, the greater the 'social connectedness' of individuals, the less likely it would be that they rely on substitute variables to calculate ASB or regard the presence of a particular ASB as a metaphor for the poor quality of informal and formal social control in their community. The task remains to consider what factors drive the connectedness of communities and how we the authors might conceive of addressing this to confront PASB.

Recent years have witnessed widespread migration (domestic and international), individualism (particularly as embodied in consumerism) and economic uncertainty. All these factors have been suggested as contributing to the fracturing of traditional social structures, creating conditions in which people have little consideration for the sensibilities of others. Rather, the splintering of society brought about by these forces (see *inter alia* Graham and Marvin, 2001) leads social groups to retreat from engagement with others in the public realm (Sennett, 1970), to segregate dynamically into privatised enclaves (Atkinson and Flint, 2005), and to become increasingly intolerant of those perceived to be different or holding different values.

Public policies targeted at the eradication of ASB (especially those in public space), influenced by these broader trends, may have the unintended consequence of lowering public tolerance (Kearns and Bannister, 2009). This is perhaps especially so where the popularity of public policy is associated with a symbolic exclusionary focus rather than an instrumental engagement with the drivers of ASB (Crawford, 2009). Even as strategies strive to reduce ASB in the short term, they may serve to maintain PASB. Attempting to eradicate ASB, to exclude or expel those (people and behaviours) that are regarded as problematic appears very attractive in an age of uncertainty. Of course, as well as having a perceptual dimension, ASB can also be a real and pressing problem. Perversely, however, strategies of exclusion hold the potential to fuel uncertainty yet further, and in so doing lower one's empathy and mutual respect, increasing PASB. In line with Sennett (1970), if people withdraw from social interaction with others, they will lose their ability to negotiate the shared use of space. Rather, they will ultimately depend on what they see and hear (indirectly) to form a judgement of other people's intentions, of their values. In this way, one comes to rely on stereotype; one comes to rely on the observation of minor incivilities as a metaphor for the weakness of informal and formal social control; and, in the absence of connectedness to community, the observation of significant events (however far in the past) will continue to have a resonance in people's anxieties.

To develop more effective strategies to combat PASB, consideration needs to be given to the foundations of a policy suite that can promote empathy and mutual respect. These strategies might be thought to include the following components (drawing on Bannister and Kearns, 2009: 177)

- **Cognitive:** raising empathy and mutual respect through changed moral perspective or via

understanding (increasing connectedness) of the causes of the perpetrator's 'need' or 'right' to engage in the conduct - that is, one thinks about it differently and sees it as 'less wrong' than previously.

- **Behavioural:** enabling people to make behavioural adaptation, e.g. avoidance and making spaces available for different purposes at different times.

- **Ameliorative:** raising empathy and mutual respect through direct engagement, leading to both the moderation of perspective and of the perpetrator's behaviour (a strong relational strategy).

- **Psychological:** raising the threshold of empathy and mutual respect through the deployment of strategies designed to improve people's coping mechanisms.

All of these strategies are grounded in the need to promote (various qualities of) engagement. Even a limited level of engagement can generate empathy and mutual respect. Engagement should be defined as meaningful and purposeful social interaction and collective activity, not simply co-presence in space. The ideas presented here therefore do not only recognise the limitations of attempting to address PASB by strategies focusing exclusively on the eradication of ASB, they further suggest that alternative strategies which seek to reduce PASB with reference to the conceptual analysis performed above might also hold the potential to impact upon ASB. We do not endeavour here to specify further criteria for these types of strategies. We recognise the requirement to undertake an assessment of whether existing interventions address these criteria or whether further work is required to develop substantive interventions based on this framework. This is outside the scope of the current report.

Practical implications of the literature review

- Increased community engagement has the potential to lower PASB through bringing people together in ways that support mutual understanding, which can diminish the tendency for people to operate with one-dimensional or stereotyped views of other people or groups.

- Helping people to understand the patterns of local crime in their area by way of sharing official information with them can support them in their individual decisions to manage their interactions with the risks in their neighbourhoods. Whether or not they actually manage these risks effectively, the sense that there are geographical or time boundaries around these risks may lower PASB. These processes of delimitation of crime and ASB problems can minimise public impressions that they are a random threat.

- People do not tend to estimate neighbourhood crime risks with accuracy, so helping them to do so by sharing information about local crime and ASB trends and patterns may lower PASB, particularly if the rates or severity of ASB are significantly lower than people estimate.

- The demographic correlations with PASB, such as living in a hard-pressed area and having prior experience of victimisation, suggest that serious continued attention to social problems such as concentrated deprivation and crime would directly affect PASB.

- Taking problems of crime and ASB seriously by way of, for example, official community-level presence of wardens and community police can send 'control signals' to residents, which reassures them that something is being done about their local problems and may lower PASB. However, more police and/or other officials do not automatically provide greater confidence in the authorities or perceptions of safety; the manner in which such officers interact with the public is important too, including public perceptions of procedural fairness and wider questions of legitimacy.

- The fact that the prior victimisation correlated to higher PASB can be real or 'virtual' suggests that in relation to virtual victimisation, engagement with the media might lower PASB if one were able to discourage scare stories and the misrepresentation of isolated or unusual instances of crime and ASB as common.

- In a parallel to the thinking employed in 'hot spots' policing, PASB may be lowered by identification of local crime generators and attractors and response to the concerns of residents living closest to these, and most affected by them. Within neighbourhoods it seems that these generators and attractors can cause highly localised 'hot spots' of PASB which, if successfully dealt with, could dramatically lower the overall neighbourhood-level indicator of PASB. In the UK context, housing type seems to be a factor differentiating hot spots of PASB from lower PASB areas.

- If PASB is related to broader social anxieties, then addressing the drivers of those anxieties may lower PASB. There is much academic literature on the causes and forms of contemporary social anxieties, which could be mined for policy-relevant interventions. Sources of contemporary insecurity include breakdown in previously relatively stable and predictable life pathways, such as in the job market, family life, financial security, and geographical mobility/identity. Increasing the number and dependability of sources of certainty in people's lives may reduce these feelings of uncertainty in the face of seemingly rapid economic and social change.

4. Effective interventions to reduce PASB

In this section we briefly review interventions which have been seen to work to reduce PASB, and then go on to summarise the policy implications by way of setting out eight broad categories of intervention which promise to deliver reductions in PASB on the local and national level, and in the short and long term.

A number of interventions have been found to have a positive impact on PASB, although the evidence base is not particularly robust in this regard. Research consistently indicates a strong desire for the presence of uniformed authority, primarily the police (Casey, 2008; Atkinson and Flint, 2003; Flint and Kearns, 2005). However, an over-reliance upon the police can also lead to a withdrawal of residents from interactions and negotiations over the use of neighbourhood spaces, which can in turn lead to a perception that a regular police presence equates to serious ASB (Crawford *et al.*, 2003; Innes and Jones, 2006). There is also evidence that place-oriented police 'crackdowns', based on the broken windows principle, can significantly increase the probability of local residents feeling unsafe, and 'accordingly any fear reduction benefits gained by reducing disorder may be offset by the fact that the policing strategies employed simultaneously increase fear of crime' (Hinkle and Weisburd, 2008: 503).

The study of PASB in eight neighbourhoods in Scotland (Flint *et al.*, 2007b) found evidence that it was possible for residents in particular neighbourhoods to perceive a considerable improvement in ASB problems in a period of 12 months. The study suggested that the key drivers for these improved perceptions were renovation of the housing stock; active management of public space; multi-agency partnership working; and the targeting of substantial resources on designated areas. We need to be aware, though, that strategies may deliver short-term decreases in PASB which are not sustainable in the longer term.

Mediation at individual and community levels (Casey and Flint, 2007) has been important in improving interactions and understanding within local neighbourhoods. Managing expectations and challenging the drive for 'perfect control' (Minton, 2008) is an important component of such strategies. It is clear that the media (at national and local levels) has a considerable role to play in the promotion of positive stories, particularly about young people (Scottish Government, 2009). There is a need to move away from personal interpretations of what constitutes ASB (the 'alarm, harassment, and distress' enshrined in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act) towards a greater prescription and definition. Such a process of attempting to define the limits of unacceptable ASB in a more explicit manner would need to include a discussion of tolerance, mutual understanding and respect. In other words, there is a need to develop more widely shared and accepted classifications about what does or does not constitute ASB and therefore warrants a complaint being made to local agencies.

According to research by Ipsos MORI (Ames *et al.*, 2007; Duffy *et al.* 2007), individuals who feel more informed about approaches to tackling ASB have more confidence in these approaches, and information from the police may be particularly important. However, other research (Flint *et al.*, 2007a; Flint *et al.*, 2007b) suggests that the nature of this information is the key factor and that, in some cases, a plethora of information may confuse residents and leave them feeling uncertain about which agencies to respond to. As a number of studies have indicated (e.g. Casey and Flint, 2007; Duffy *et al.*, 2007), the provision of data showing that ASB (locally or nationally) is falling will not have a positive impact on PASB if these data are not regarded as valid, accurate or reflecting the realities of local circumstances. This, along with the other issues raised, suggests a need to rethink more radically what information is provided to residents. The lack of trust in official figures can also be exacerbated by agencies' initial responses to complaints about ASB. Where complaints are dismissed or are perceived as not being taken seriously, this does not diminish residents' concerns about ASB but rather exacerbates them and reduces their confidence that problems will be solved (Flint *et al.*, 2007a; Flint *et al.*, 2007b). This personal experience also impacts upon a lack

of trust in other data provided by these agencies. In other words, a committed response to individual complaints needs to be combined with wider community activities aimed at building mutual respect and understanding, and reducing inappropriate complaints.

The above strategies tend towards targeting either the environment on the one hand, or the relations between people in the environment on the other. Environmental interventions seem particularly effective in addressing the problem of metaphor we have identified – work to reduce signs of neighbourhood physical decline and the provision of visible official presence in communities can serve to reduce the likelihood that PASB will be perceptually equated with broader social decline. Mediation and other interpersonal and inter-group strategies may ameliorate the issues raised in relation to stereotypes above. However, while these strategies can be used to target PASB in the short term, given the considerations raised in our work towards a theoretical model of PASB, we should question whether they engage with the long-term drivers of PASB which lie in the quality of community relations. Similarly, strategies which prioritise enforcement may have multiple objectives – including reassurance – but if one of these objectives is the reduction of PASB, enforcement-oriented strategies may only have a short-term effect, being more likely to maintain levels of PASB in the medium to longer term. Inter-agency environmental strategies, mediations and enforcement may address the *manifestation* of ASB and PASB but longer-term proactive strategies seem to be required which promote community engagement and go beneath the manifestation of ASB-related problems to address the underlying *drivers* which subsist at the level of social relations (Casey and Flint, 2007; Flint and Kearns, 2005). In other words, a dual approach is required in addressing PASB, involving on the one hand reducing actual ASB and on the other hand ensuring that legitimate behaviour is not defined and perceived as ASB.

We suggest eight broad strategies that will improve PASB and warrant further research into their efficacy.

Shorter term, neighbourhood level

- **Public information strategies.** Ensuring residents are **fully informed** about local patterns of crime and disorder in ways which may mitigate fear and promote individuals' sense of control over risk in their neighbourhoods. Greater use of figures on actual incidences of ASB can sometimes reveal that such incidences are relatively rare, have reduced or have been improved by recent interventions. Greater use of finer-grained data such as social landlord records or police command and control data can assist in providing this more accurate and up to date localised picture, for example identifying multiple complaints about the same specific incident (although it is important that confidentiality is retained). Likewise, **positive media relations** (e.g. between the local authority and local newspapers) to encourage the dissemination of 'success stories' in tackling ASB, positive stories about young people and to discourage 'scare stories' and the misrepresentation of isolated or unusual instances of ASB as commonplace. It is important that positive relations are formed with newspaper subeditors as well as local journalists. The use of (anonymised) first hand accounts from residents about their experiences and case study examples of how ASB was tackled can be effective - particularly if they capture some of the difficulties and long-term commitment often required to resolve an issue of ASB. It is also a good idea to ensure that community newsletters providing good news stories are distributed to residents in nearby neighbourhoods to help counter the stigmatisation of particular areas.

- **Public reassurance initiatives.** Community wardens and neighbourhood policing can send 'control signals' which suggest to residents that 'something is being done' about their local problems, reducing fear. It is important that an enhanced presence of official authority is supported by efforts to build their legitimacy, including providing information to residents about the activities of wardens, Community Support Officers and police officers, and about the impacts of their activities. Reassurance is also generated by residents perceiving that their concerns and reports of ASB are being taken seriously and not dismissed. The initial reaction of front-line police officers, housing officers and other local agencies is therefore crucial. It is important that policing and patrol strategies engage with, for example, young people and youth workers, and wherever possible ensure proactive positive encounters in order to avoid the continuing marginalisation and social exclusion of some groups. It is also important that realistic reassurance is provided that is believable to local residents (for example, avoiding stating that ASB is not a problem where it is, or claiming that there is no possibility of any negative consequences for an individual making a complaint).

- **Environmental interventions** may work to reduce signs of neighbourhood physical decline in communities and serve to reduce the likelihood that PASB will be equated with broader social decline. These interventions include those specifically aimed at reducing ASB and PASB, such as better street lighting, provision of litter bins, or improved neighbourhood-level play and sports facilities for children and young people. Wider neighbourhood improvement projects, such as investment in the housing stock and higher quality public spaces, as well as community art projects, may also have positive impacts on ASB and PASB. This physical investment symbolises the commitment of agencies to a neighbourhood and creates a sense of a positive trajectory of neighbourhood change, which in turn may generate an enhanced sense of community ownership and attachment amongst residents. Environmental interventions also provide real opportunities to involve excluded or marginalised groups such as young people and to enhance positive interaction between groups (such as young and elderly residents). Environmental improvements further provide an opportunity for communities to assume ownership of tangible assets in their neighbourhood. The rapid removal of litter and abandoned cars and repair of vandalism further creates opportunities to visibly demonstrate the efficacy and commitment of local interventions to address ASB. The identification of **local crime generators and attractors,** and action to respond to the concerns of residents living closest to these and most affected by them, would attend to one aspect of the problem of 'PASB hot spots'. This requires comprehensive engagement with residents to capture their perceptions and ensure that they have a sense of ownership of the measures put in place. It is also important that strong partnership arrangements are in place to facilitate the sharing of fine-grained and up to date intelligence between agencies. This should lead to a local action plan of measures which should be subject to review and it is very important that longer term strategies are put in place to demonstrate continuing commitment to a neighbourhood, particularly if a short-term increase in resources and policing presence cannot be sustained.

Longer term, neighbourhood level

- Increasing **community cohesion and building trust** can diminish the tendency for people to operate with one-dimensional or stereotyped views of other people or groups and increase mutual respect and empathy. This requires facilitating positive interactions between groups, both to provide a greater sense of communal obligation and attachment to neighbourhoods and the populations within them, such as community events, history and arts projects and engagement with service providers. It also requires a proactive effort to understand, address and resolve particular sites and times of conflict and tensions generating PASB. This is likely to be achieved by combining mediation at the individual level with greater use of community-level mediation processes, to address conflicts between populations and to foster a sense of shared purpose in achieving wider improvements to local areas, such as engagement with service providers. These strategies need to be aware of, and work with, the grain of, existing social ties within communities whilst recognising that some groups may currently be excluded from these networks.

- Action to address **policies and practices of formal public agencies** that can generate negative impacts (e.g. concentration of deprivation and crime through housing management strategies) which in turn help create the conditions for PASB (and ASB). This includes, for example housing allocation processes. It is important that local residents have a sense of ownership of these policies and practices and understand the reasoning and resources that these are based upon.

Shorter term, national level

- Moves away from subjective interpretations of what constitutes ASB (as enshrined in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act) towards a **greater prescription and definition**. This is important to ensure that local residents have a greater understanding of their own role in addressing ASB and are more able to make informed choices about what does or does not constitute ASB. In turn, this will address the issue of residents believing that their complaints about ASB are summarily dismissed by local agencies. This will assist the police, social landlords and other partners in attempting to ensure that resources are given and complaints are legitimate and proportionate.

Longer term, national level

- Policy should attempt to address the **social and economic conditions** that are associated with ASB and PASB, more specifically deprivation, social integration and inequality, as these structural elements are key determinants of PASB. Although it may not be possible to 'resolve' these issues, an acknowledgement of their role in generating ASB and

PASB and an explicit strategy to link interventions aimed at these social and economic conditions to tackling ASB is important. It is also important that the Government continues to develop a policy focus on the underlying causes of ASB at individual and household levels, for example through Family Intervention Projects, particularly as visible improvements to some of the most serious and problematic ASB occurring in a neighbourhood is the greatest source of reassurance and confidence that may be provided to local residents.

- **Government action to reassure the anxious public**. PASB may be lowered through action designed to mitigate a range of social anxieties and insecurities which act as those mediating mechanisms that lead to PASB and improve the quality of community relations in the longer term. This includes a more careful consideration of the tendency to 'talk up' the extent of ASB and the need to address the public's distrust of official statistics (as for example recommended by the Casey review, 2008).

There is a continuing need for more research to improve understanding of the connections between specific packages of interventions and improved PASB at the community and neighbourhood level. This is likely to require detailed case study work in localities where PASB has been improved. One needs to understand the specific dynamics and drivers underpinning such improvements.

5. Conclusion

We have reviewed a number of studies which provide important evidence about the diverse individual and social factors that give rise to PASB. A key finding is that perceptions of ASB are to some extent independent of other measurable indicators of ASB.

There is considerable evidence from the British Crime Survey and other large-scale studies that PASB varies with demographic variables and geographically by levels of deprivation and cohesion. These studies point to differences between neighbourhoods, but studies also point to differences within neighbourhoods which have similar socio-demographic profiles and to the way in which PASB varies between streets or blocks of flats.

Studies which have tried to explain these statistical associations point to a range of mechanisms including:

- the propensity to use stereotypes as suggestive of disorder;
- a sense of powerlessness among residents and low perceptions of community cohesion and the interpretation of certain behaviours as indicative of the quality of formal and informal control in the community;
- behaviours being interpreted as indicative of wider social problems;
- the relationship between close proximity to 'crime-relevant' non-residential land and increased PASB;
- the 'connectedness' of an individual to both other users of a particular space and to particular ASBs.

These different social processes identified in the literature can be theorised as acting to generate PASB through a process of interpretation. We have modelled two different aspects of interpretation, as 'stereotype' and 'metaphor' processes.

Bearing in mind the evidence regarding the processes that drive PASB and the emerging evidence about what might work in addressing PASB, we suggest that policy responses need to be targeted at the range of levels where the mechanisms that drive perceptions are located. This requires a package of linked interventions that are immediate and local in nature, complemented by actions that have longer term objectives and which are facilitated and supported by national policy and discourse. These strategies need to address both the environmental and social drivers of PASB and need to be grounded in recognition that it is the synergies and combined impact of a range of interventions and measures that will be most effective in influencing PASB. Our review has highlighted the mismatch between recorded incidences of ASB and PASB. However, it is also the case that strategies and interventions that target and reduce actual instances of ASB, and are demonstrated to achieve this, remain central to wider efforts to improve PASB at individual and community levels.

There is a need for more research into the drivers of PASB. In part this is because many of the studies reviewed here are derived from research carried out in the US – a substantially different policy context – and the studies

reviewed cover a wide range of different types of 'problem' behaviour (incivility, disorder, ASB) indicative of the all-encompassing definition of ASB. As such, further research is needed to explore the relevance of these studies to the UK context.

Methodological appendix

For this review we used a combination of approaches to sourcing and analysing literature. The core of the study was a Rapid Evidence Assessment, which is effectively a restricted form of systematic review that is devised in order to place acceptable limitations on the breadth of the search for literature in order to achieve the best results within a limited timescale. We describe this process below. Prior to undertaking the REA literature search, we compiled a list of literature already known to the research team which we thought would be likely to be relevant to the research questions. This literature was included in the review. It was also used as a reference point to ensure that the REA database search was targeting a satisfactory number of the most relevant publications.

It should be noted that while the REA method was used to generate and process the core of the studies reviewed, and more traditional literature review methods were used to supplement that REA, the conclusions we present in the report are a theory-oriented interpretation of the research findings that are reviewed. Although the REA method described below adds objectivity and rigour at certain points in the research process, ultimately we have tended towards theory-generating interpretation of the literature rather than a less active reading of the task of 'evidence assessment'. While the benefits of this approach seem clear, it places limits on the objectivity involved in reporting the available evidence.

The combined search methods detailed below generated a core of relevant publications, but only some of these were amenable to our Quality Review (QR) procedure. Other studies contained theoretical work, proposed hypotheses about PASB, commented on data collected by other researchers, 'evaluated' policy in a way which generated relevant ideas but was not systematic enough to be amenable to QR, or discussed work in fields such as ASB, fear of crime, or youth crime which we felt was relevant to consideration of PASB although not framed in those terms. The studies reviewed were therefore wide-ranging, and those which were not amenable to QR were used to provide context for the core of studies which were.

In terms of how to approach the question of integrating a core of QR'd studies into the other literature we mentioned, we have found instructive the work of the EPPI-Centre (Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre) at the Institute of Education, University of London. These researchers have taken steps toward designing a framework which

> *describes a new model for research synthesis; an emerging framework for combining the findings of different types of studies, including those which collect 'qualitative' data, within a systematic review. This framework facilitates the conduct of systematic reviews to address questions beyond effectiveness.*
>
> (Oliver *et al.*, 2005: 429)

In our study of PASB, only a small number of studies could be classified as 'intervention' studies, which are the usual object of systematic reviews. Many more of the publications fell into the category of what the EPPI-Centre researchers call 'views studies': that is, 'research on people's perspectives and experiences' (Harden *et al.*, 2004). Inclusion of these types of evidence alongside intervention studies in a systematic review is done by way of a process inspired by the coding procedures used to analyse original qualitative research data in the most common methods such as grounded theory analysis. Key themes are extracted from qualitative reports of people's 'views' and narratives are developed which are able to synthesise these themes into plausible streams of evidence in a process comparable to the 'constant comparison' of theory and evidence in the grounded theory method. We have followed this procedure in the present analysis. Given that our research was explicitly a study concerned with people's views, the research was unusual compared to other systematic reviews of evidence in that the narrative, theoretical and qualitative element of the study outpaced the quantitative or intervention evidence in terms of what it was able to suggest about the problem of PASB. Because of this, we organised the whole report slightly differently from a usual REA, while still endeavouring to retain the standards of quality in evidence required by that method. Dixon-Woods *et al.*, (2004) have suggested that synthesis of mainly qualitative research evidence in a systematic review format can use theoretical sampling as opposed to the exhaustive search procedures normally employed in such a review. We used exhaustive search procedures here, however, in order to maximise our confidence at having found as much evidence as was possible with only the limitations on the search criteria declared below.

Overview of REA search procedure

The REA method involved a systematic search of citation indexes and relevant databases. Potentially relevant research was then assessed by the research team for relevance and quality using our Quality Review tool.

In respect of 'grey' literature (unpublished and/or in press) and to complement our initial list of relevant publications which we compiled before embarking on the database search, we contacted the academics and practitioners listed in the table below asking for details of grey literature and other feedback on the research questions. No relevant grey literature emerged as a result of these contacts, but some useful input was received by way of expert views on the answers to the research questions. We have synthesised this input into the report. We are also grateful for other input we received from Vicky Heap, a doctoral candidate at the University of Huddersfield, who sent us an advance copy of her literature review on PASB and a list of key sources, which we included in our initial list of key literature.

Experts contacted	
Sarah Blandy	University of Leeds
Maggie Blyth	Chair of Nottingham Youth Offending Team Management Board
Elizabeth Burney	Cambridge University
Steve Burton	Director of Community Safety Enforcement and Policing at Transport for London
Helen Carr	University of Kent
Stephen Farrall	Sheffield University
John Graham	Chair of the Police Foundation
Phil Hadfield	University of Leeds
Chief Supt. David Harvey	Head of Prevention, Youth Justice Board
Mike Hough	King's College London
Phil Hubbard	Loughborough University
Gordon Hughes	Cardiff University
Caroline Hunter	University of York
Martin Innes	University of Cardiff
Jon Jackson	London School of Economics
Anna King	Rutgers (and Keele University)
Roy Light	Barrister at St John's Chambers and Bristol Law School
Shadd Maruna	Queen's University Belfast
Gillian Mayfield/ Harvinder Saimbhi	Youth Taskforce, Leeds
Stephen Moore	Anglia Ruskin University
Judy Nixon	Sheffield Hallam University
David Prior	University of Birmingham
Phil Read and Martin Baines	Pacalis Associates
Peter Somerville	University of Lincoln
Peter Squires	University of Brighton
Teela Sanders	University of Leeds

Database search

A list of academic databases, relevant websites and reliable search engines was drawn up by the research team in consultation with the Home Office.

Search terms and limits

These databases were systematically searched using search terms identified by the research team in collaboration with the Home Office which were designed to find research on drivers of PASB. The approach taken was to generate two categories of synonym – one for perceptions, the other for ASB and types of ASB – and then to combine them using an 'AND' operator in order to generate hits which contained reference to both perception-type words and ASB-type words.

Due to the idiosyncratic nature of the databases used, a flexible approach was developed. Initially databases were searched using a short string (see string 1 below). This refined list of search terms produced irrelevant results such as: perceptions of the effects of alcohol; perceptions of psychological disorders; results from drug or alcohol trials and young people's perceptions of different phenomena not relating to the study.

Through a process of trial and error it was found that the longest string of terms (3) produced the most exacting results. Unfortunately, several of the databases employed did not have the capacity to input the longest string. Where a database would accept neither the long string (3) nor the original string (1), an alternative 'short string' (2) was used.

1: original string
(antisocial or anti-social or disorder or incivilit* or nuisance or drug or drugs or alcohol or drunk or litter or rubbish or trash or asbo or garbage or graffiti or vandal* or rowd* or youth or teen* or "young people" or adolescen*) AND (perception or perceiv* or attitude* or react* or response or respond* or intoleran* or toleran*)

2: short string
(antisocial or anti-social or disorder or incivilit* or delinquen* or nuisance or drug or alcohol or drunk or litter* or asbo or graffiti or vandal* or rowd* or youth or "young people") AND (perception or perceiv* or attitude* or react* or response or respond* or *toleran* or view*)

3: extended string
(antisocial or crim* or offen* or "fear of crime" or disorder or incivilit* or nuisance or drug or alcohol or drink* or drunk or delinquen* or litter or rubbish or nois* or ASBO or asbos or vandal* or graffiti or rowd* or youth* or "young people" or teenager or adolescen* or respect or disrespect or "hanging about" or "hanging around" or "night-time economy" or "fly tip" or "public space" or "public spaces" or intimidat* or harass* or gang* or lout* or hooligan* or "dispersal order" or "dispersal zone" or "CCTV" or "damage to property" or "property damage" or "damage to vehicle" or "vehicle damage" or "abandoned car" or "burned out car") AND (perception* or assessment* or impression* or understanding* or react* or respon* or attitude*or anger or angry or frustrat*or irritat* or toleran* or intoleran* or feel* or view* or powerless or alarm or distress or "quality of life" or think* or idea* or media or awareness).

Database search results

	Search terms	Number of results	No. of results after 1st filter
Bibliography of Nordic Criminology	3	83	2
C2 SPECTR	1,2,3	0	0
Criminal Justice Abstracts	2	204	10
Copac	Keyword search	527	37
CSA Illumina (includes Sociological Abstracts Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts)	1 3	194 7,028	5 92
Drugdata	Keyword search Browse web resources	0 n/a	6
Geobase	1	153	5
Google Web			
Google Scholar	Keyword search		
Keyword search	287,140		
84	17		
5			
IBSS	1	452	25
Ingenta Connect	Keyword search	2,560	14
ISI Web of Knowledge	1	1,903	25
National Criminal Justice Reference Service	Keyword search	204	10
PolicyHub	Keyword search	n/a	12
PsychInfo	3	14,750	33
Social Programs that work	Not a database;		
Browsed for relevant information	0	0	
Swetswise	2	6,798	4
Worldwide Political Science Abstracts	3	204	13

Search limitations

The search was limited in the following ways:

- search terms in the title/abstract only;
- by year: 1995- present;
- results in English only.

The database search produced a large number of results (35,040 – not including the results from the Google searches).[3] In the first stage, the research assistant read titles and abstracts and discarded results which were clearly irrelevant.[4] This produced a total of 315 results (including some duplicates).

Duplicates were then removed. The remainder were reviewed by two members of the research team. Of these, 74 were considered possibly relevant. These were then distributed among the research team for initial review. After this stage, 61 were accepted into the REA. Of these, 36 were not amenable to our QR procedure as they were either theoretical or analytical papers which were not original research, or they were informative but not centrally relevant to the research questions. A further 25 were amenable to QR as original relevant research studies. The included studies are listed here, with the 25 QR'd studies in bold and including their QR rating. This list includes only those sources QR'd and/or turned up by the database search. Since none of the 25 studies had a QR rating below 'medium', we considered them all to meet the standards of appropriately reliable evidence, and have not highlighted those which were especially 'strong' in the main body of the report.

1. **Ames, A., Powell, H., Crouch, J. and Tse, D. (2007) *Anti-social Behaviour: People, Place and Perceptions*. London: Ipsos MORI. QR STRONG.**

2. Antunes, M.J.L. (2006) 'Routine Activities and Television Viewing: an Exploration of the Influences of Fear of Crime in Lisbon, Portugal', *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 30(1): pp 1-23.

3. Ashworth, A., Gardner, J., Morgan, R., Smith, A., von Hirsch, A. and Wasik, M. (1998) 'Neighbouring on the Oppressive: the Government's "Anti-social Behaviour Order" Proposals', *Criminal Justice,* 16(1): pp 7-14.

4. **Atkinson, R. and Flint, J. (2003) 'Order Born Out of Chaos? The Capacity for Informal Social Control in Disempowered and "Disorganised" Neighbourhoods', *Policy and Politics*, 32(3): pp 333-350. QR MEDIUM.**

5. Atkinson, R. and Flint, J. (2005) 'Fortress UK? Gated Communities and the Spatial Revolt of the Elites and Time-space Trajectories of Segregation', *Housing Studies*, 19(6): pp 875-892.

6. **Austin, D.M. and Sanders, C. (2007) 'Graffiti and Perceptions of Safety: a Pilot Study Using Photographs and Survey Data', *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*, 14(4): pp 292-316. QR MEDIUM.**

7. **Benedict, W.R., Brown, B. and Bower, D.J. (2000) 'Perceptions of the Police and Fear of Crime in a Rural Setting: Utility of a Geographically Focused Survey for Police Services, Planning and Assessment', *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 11(4): pp 275-298. QR MEDIUM.**

8. Biressi, A. and Nunn, H. (2003) 'Video Justice: Crimes of Violence in Social/Media Space', *Space and Culture*, 6(3): pp 276-291.

9. Bottoms, A. (2006) 'Incivilities, Offence and Social Order in Residential Communities', in von Hirsch, A. and Simester A.P. (eds) *Incivilities: Regulating Offensive Behaviour.* Oxford: Hart.

10. Burney, E. (2005) *Making People Behave: Anti-social Behaviour, Politics and Policy*. Cullompton, Devon: Willan.

11. Campbell, S. (2002) 'A Review of Anti-social Behaviour Orders', *Home Office Research Study 236*. London: Home Office.

12. **Carvalho, I. and Lewis, D.A. (2006) 'Beyond Community: Reactions to Crime and Disorder among Inner-city Residents', *Criminology*, 41(3): pp 779-812. QR STRONG.**

13. Casey, L. (2008) *Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime*. London: Cabinet Office.

3 The Google search engine could only be searched with keywords. This produced a large number of results. These were organised in order of relevance. The first 1,500 were reviewed.

4 A large portion of results were immediately discarded since they were irrelevant. This included: medical research on reactions to drugs and alcohol or the results of drug tests (drug tolerance and drug reactions); psychological research on psychological disorders; and young people's attitudes towards drugs, alcohol and drink driving. These had to be filtered out manually since there was no viable way to conduct the research which avoided these results.

14. Casey, R. and Flint, J. (2007) 'Active Citizenship in the Governance of Anti-social Behaviour in the UK: Exploring the Non-reporting of Incidents', *People, Place and Policy Online*, 2(1).

15. Christie-Mizell, C.A. and Erickson, R.J. (2007) 'Mothers and Mastery: the Consequences of Perceived Disorder', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 70(4): pp 340-365. QR MEDIUM/STRONG.

16. Ditton, J. and Chadee, D. (2006) 'People's Perceptions of their Likely Future Risk of Criminal Victimisation', *British Journal of Criminology*, 46(3): pp 505-518. QR MEDIUM.

17. Dixon, T.L. (2008) 'Crime News and Racialized Beliefs: Understanding the Relationship between News Viewing and Perceptions of African Americans and Crime', *Journal of Communication*, 58(1): pp 106-125.

18. Doyle, A. (2006) 'How Not to Think about Crime in the Media', *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 48(6): pp 867-885.

19. Duffy, B., Wake, R., Burrows, T. and Bremner, P. (2007) *Closing the Gaps: Crime and Public Perceptions*. London: Ipsos MORI. QR MEDIUM.

20. Esbensen, F.-A. and Tusinski, K.E. (2007) 'Youth Gangs in the Print Media', *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*, 14(1): pp 21-38.

21. Flatley, J., Moley, S. and Hoare, J. (2008) 'Perceptions of Anti-social Behaviour: Findings from the 2007/08 British Crime Survey', *Home Office Statistical Bulletin 15/08*. London: Home Office. QR STRONG.

22. Flint, J., Casey, R., Davidson, E., Pawson, H. and McCoulough, E. (2007) *Tackling Anti-social Behaviour in Glasgow: an Evaluation of Policy and Practice in the Glasgow Housing Association*. Glasgow: Glasgow Housing Association. QR MEDIUM.

23. Flint, J., Green, S., Hunter, C., Nixon, J., Parr, S., Manning, J., Wilson, I., Pawson, H. and Davidson, E. (2007) *The Impact of Antisocial Behaviour Strategies at the Neighbourhood Level*. Edinburgh: Scottish Government. QR MEDIUM.

24. Geis, K.J. and Ross, C.E. (1998) 'A New Look at Urban Alienation: the Effect of Neighbourhood Disorder on Perceived Powerlessness', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 61(pp 232-246).

25. Girling, E., Loader, I. and Sparks, R. (2000) *Crime and Social Change in Middle England: Questions of Order in an English Town*. London: Routledge.

26. Goidel, R.K., Freeman, C.M. and Procopio, S.T. (2006) 'The Impact of Television Viewing on Perceptions of Juvenile Crime', *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 50(1): pp 119-139.

27. Goldsmith, C. (2008) 'Cameras, Cops and Contracts', in Squires, P. (ed) *ASBO Nation*. Bristol: Policy Press. QR MEDIUM.

28. Harradine, S., Kodz, J., Lernetti, F. and Jones, B. (2004) 'Defining and Measuring Anti-social Behaviour', *Home Office Development and Practice Report 26*. London: Home Office.

29. Hayton, K. and Shaw, L. (2008) *Focus Groups with the Public to Support the Review of the National Antisocial Behaviour Strategy*. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

30. Heath, L. and Gilbert, K. (1996) 'Mass Media and Fear of Crime', *American Behavioral Scientist*, 39(4): pp 379-386.

31. Innes, M. (2005) 'Why "Soft" Policing is Hard: On the Curious Development of Reassurance Policing, How it Became Neighbourhood Policing and What this Signifies About the Politics of Reform', *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 15(3): pp 156-169.

32. Innes, M. and Jones, V. (2006) *Neighbourhood Security and Urban Change: Risk, Resilience and Recovery*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. QR MEDIUM.

33. Kelling, G. and Coles, C.M. (1996) *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in Our Communities*. New York: Free Press.

34. Kuntsche, E.N. and Kuendig, H. (2005) 'Do School Surroundings Matter? Alcohol Outlet Density, Perception of Adolescent Drinking in Public, and Adolescent Alcohol Use', *Addictive Behaviors*, 30: pp 151-158. QR STRONG.

35. Lane, J. and Meeker, J.W. (2004) 'Social Disorganization Perceptions, Fear of Gang Crime, and Behavioural Precautions among Whites, Latinos and Vietnamese', *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 32(1): pp 49-62. QR MEDIUM.

36. McAuley, M. and MacDonald, K.I. (2007) 'Russia and Youth Crime: a Comparative Study of Attitudes and their Implications', *British Journal of Criminology*, 47(1): pp 2-22. QR MEDIUM.

37. McCord, E.S., Ratcliffe, J.H., Garcia, R.M. and Taylor, R.B. (2007) 'Nonresidential Crime Attractors and Generators Elevate Perceived Neighbourhood Crime and Incivilities', *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 44(3): pp 295-320. QR STRONG.

38. Millie, A. (2007) 'Looking for Anti-social Behaviour', *Policy and Politics*, 35(4): pp 611-627. QR MEDIUM/STRONG.

39. Millie, A. (2008) 'Anti-social Behaviour, Behavioural Expectations and an Urban Aesthetic', *British Journal of Criminology*, 48(3): p 379-394.

40. Millie, A., Jacobson, J., McDonald, E. and Hough, M. (2005) *Anti-social Behaviour Strategies: Finding a Balance*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

41. O'Connell, M. (1999) 'Is Irish Public Opinion towards Crime Distorted by Media Bias?' *European Journal of Communication*, 14(2): pp 191-212.

42. O'Connell, M.O. and Whelan, A. (1996) 'Public Perception of Crime Prevalence, Newspaper Readership and Mean World Attitudes', *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 1(2): p 179.

43. Payne, B.K. and Gainey, R.R. (2007) 'Attitudes about the Police and Neighbourhood Safety in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods: the Influence of Criminal Victimisation and Perceptions of a Drug Problem', *Criminal Justice Review*, 32(2): pp 142-155. QR MEDIUM/STRONG.

44. Perrone, P.A. and Chesney-Lind, M. (1998) 'Media Presentations of Juvenile Crime in Hawaii: Wild in the Streets?' *Crime Trend Series*, 6(1): p 1.

45. Pfeiffer, C., Winzio, M. and Kleimann, M. (2005) 'Media Use and its Impacts on Crime Perception, Sentencing Attitudes and Crime Policy', *European Journal of Criminology,* 2(3): pp 259-285.

46. Philips, T. and Smith, P. (2003) 'Everyday Incivility: Towards a Benchmark', *The Sociological Review*, 51(1): pp 85-108.

47. Ramsay, P. (2004) 'What is Anti-social Behaviour?' *The Criminal Law Review*, November: pp 908-925.

48. Ross, C.E., Reynolds, J.R. and Geis, K.J. (2000) 'The Contingent Meaning of Neighbourhood Stability for Residents' Psychological Well-being', *American Sociological Review*, 65(pp 581-597).

49. Rountree, P.W. and Land, K.C. (1996) 'Burglary Victimization, Perceptions of Crime Risk, and Routine Activities: a Multilevel Analysis Across Seattle Neighbourhoods and Census Tracts', *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 33(2): pp 147-180. QR MEDIUM.

50. Sampson, R.J. (2009) 'Disparity and Diversity in the Contemporary City: Social (Dis)order Revisited', *British Journal of Sociology*, 60(1): pp 1-31. QR STRONG.

51. Sampson, R.J. and Raudenbush, S.W. (2004) 'Seeing Disorder: Neighbourhood Stigma and the Social Construction of "Broken Windows"', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 67(4): pp 319-342. QR STRONG.

52. Shrum, L.J. (1998) 'Effects of Television Portrayals of Crime and Violence on Viewers' Perceptions of Reality: a Psychological Process Perspective', *Legal Studies Forum*, 22(1-3): pp 257-268.

53. Smithson, H. and Flint, J. (2006) 'Responding to Young People's Involvement in Anti-social Behaviour: a Study of Local Initiatives in Manchester and Glasgow', *Youth and Policy*, 93: pp 21-40. QR MEDIUM/STRONG.

54. Taylor, R.B. (1996) 'Neighbourhood Responses to Disorder and Local Attachments: the Systemic Model of Attachment, Social Disorganization and Neighbourhood Use Value', *Sociological Forum*, 11(1): pp 41-74.

55. Tuffin, R., Morris, J. and Poole, A. (2006) 'An Evaluation of the Impact of the National Reassurance Policing Programme', *Home Office Research Study 296*. London: Home Office.

56. Tulloch, J. (1999) 'Fear of Crime and the Media: Sociocultural Theories of Risk', in Lupton, D. (ed) *Risk and Sociocultural Theory: New Directions and Perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 34-58.

57. Upson, A. (2006) 'Perceptions and Experience of Anti-social Behaviour: Findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey', *Home Office Online Report 21/06*. London: Home Office. QR STRONG.

58. Valkenburg, P.M. and Patiwael, M. (1998) 'Does Watching Court TV "Cultivate" People's Perceptions of Crime?' *Gazette*, 60(3): pp 227-238.

59. Welch, M., Price, E.A. and Yankey, N. (2002) 'Moral Panic Over Youth Violence: Wilding and the Manufacture of Menace in the Media', *Youth & Society*, 34(1): pp 3-30.

60. Wood, M. (2004) 'Perceptions and Experience of Antisocial Behaviour: Findings from the 2003/2004 British Crime Survey', *Home Office Online Report 49/04*. London: Home Office. QR STRONG.

61. Wyn, J. (2005) 'Youth in the Media: Adult Stereotypes of Young People', in Williams, A. and Thurlow, C. (eds) *Talking Adolescence: Perspectives on Communication in Teenage Years*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Quality review and data extraction procedure

Included studies were subject to quality review and data extraction procedures. These were standardised to ensure consistency across the research team.

Original studies generated by the REA database search were subject to review using a Quality Review tool developed for this purpose (see below). Thematic extraction of narratives/theories from other relevant articles was conducted in line with the procedure outlined above.

	Screening questions	Qual 0, 1, 2	Quant 0, 1, 2	Mixed 0, 1, 2	Comments
1	Did the study address a clearly focused issue (i.e. were the aims and objectives clearly stated)?				
2	Did the authors use an appropriate method to answer their question?				
Continue only if score on each of questions 1 and 2 is 1 or more					
	Detailed questions				
3	Explicit theoretical framework and/or literature review				
4	Clear description of study setting/context				
5	Clear description of appropriate and robust sampling procedure				
6	Clear description of data collection and discussion/justification of method				
7	Clear description of data analysis and measurement tools where appropriate (For views studies, is the analysis grounded in perceptual categories that represent the subjective interpretations of the research participants?)				
8	Evidence of critical reflection				
9	Inclusion of sufficient original data to mediate between evidence and interpretation				
10	Clear statement of findings and discussion of validity/reliability of results				
11	Strengths and limitations stated (discussion of possible confounding factors)				

Quality Review tool

The QR tool was used to assess the quality, reliability and validity of the original studies included in the RAE.

Study full reference:
0 = no; 2 = yes; 1 = unclear

Studies were then graded according the total score awarded

QR grading system:	
0-1	rejected
2-8	unreliable
9-12	weak
13-18	medium
19-22	strong

Where the study achieved a borderline grading, this is indicated – for example a score of 18 would be 'medium/strong'.

Development of the Quality Review tool

The QR procedure was developed by reviewing tools used in other recent REAs and designing the schedule above which took from these procedures what we considered the most appropriate review questions given our subject matter and the nature of the studies our literature searches were generating. Our schedule is a slightly condensed version of that used by Jackson *et al.* (2008), which itself was based on the EPPI-Centre work on synthesising in a systematic review research evidence produced from studies with a variety of methods (Harden *et al.*, 2004; Oliver *et al.*, 2005). While the schedule we developed had the benefit of being relatively less cumbersome to use in a rapid assessment of the evidence such as our research than other available schedules, we did not want to achieve this at the expense of too great a loss of rigour in evaluating study methods. We therefore used the QR tool in conjunction with a supporting series of more in-depth methodological prompt questions. These are set out below. They are selected from a wider set of questions used in a prior Home Office REA (Itzin *et al.*, 2007) – these questions were based on a schedule developed by the national Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) collaboration, and with the scoring system (which we followed in our QR tool) used by Feder *et al.* (2006) and followed in Itzin *et al.*, (2007). For qualitative studies, these questions reflect the key considerations set out in the Cabinet Office standards for quality in qualitative research (Spencer *et al.*,] 2003). For quantitative studies they include some of the considerations the Campbell collaboration refer to in their Maryland model (Sherman *et al.*, 1998) but they are more accommodating towards well-designed and implemented non-experimental studies. Given the relatively small amount of original empiricism found in relation to the drivers of PASB, the research team were concerned not to rule out evidence through too strict a QR barrier, while ensuring that judgements made as to the reliability of any data included in the REA were transparently laid out for the reader.

In considering how to score studies on the various sections of the QR tool, reviewers therefore referred to the range of supporting methodological considerations laid out below.

Supporting questions

Numbers below refer to the number of the question in the main QR tool to which the supporting question refers. Supporting questions vary in detail depending on the methodology of the study being reviewed – where a question is applicable to a particular methodology this is made clear.

1. Did the study address a clearly focused issue?

Qual Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research? Is it related to the REA topic?

Quant A question can be focused in terms of: - the population studied; the risk factors studied; the outcomes considered; an intervention given or exposure; is it clear whether the study tried to measure PASB?

2. Did the authors use an appropriate method?

Qual Is a qualitative methodology appropriate? Does the research set out to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants?

Quant Is a case control, cohort or other type of quant study, an appropriate way of answering the question under the circumstances? Did it address the study question?

3. Explicit theoretical framework and/or literature review?

No support questions needed.

4. Clear description of study setting/context

Both Was the setting for data collection justified?

5. Clear description of appropriate and robust sampling procedure

Qual Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?
Has the researcher explained how the participants were selected/recruited?
Have the researchers explained why the participants included were the most appropriate to provide the information sought?
Were there any issues with recruitment, e.g. response rate/ineligibility?

Quant Are the cases defined precisely?
Were the cases representative of a defined population (geographically and/or temporally)?.
If there was a control group, were the controls representative of a defined population (geographically or temporally)?
Was there an established reliable system for selecting all the cases?
Were a sufficient number of cases/controls selected?
If a control study, are the controls matched, population based or randomly selected? Consider scoring zero for no answer, two for explanation that satisfies, one for unclear explanation.
Was the non-response high?
Were the cases/was the cohort recruited in an acceptable way? (Hint: We are looking for selection bias which might compromise the generalisability of the findings). If there was a control group, were the controls selected in an acceptable way?
Was there something special about the cohort/controls? (hopefully answer is no)
Was everybody included who should have been included?

6. Clear description of data collection and discussion/justification of method

Qual Were the data collected in a way that addressed the research issues?
Have the reasons for the particular elements of the design been discussed and justified, especially the choice of data collection methods (interviews, focus groups, diaries and so on)?
Is it clear how data were collected? That is, by whom and over what time period.
Is the form of data clearly specified? (tape, notes)
Is there a description of the method of data collection (for instance, in interviews, was a topic guide used)?
Have they justified methods chosen? (For example, why audio taping, why notes)
Is saturation of data discussed?
If methods were modified during the study, has it been explained how and why?

Quant Is the time frame of the study relevant to the outcomes measured?
Was there measurement or classification bias?
Were the outcomes accurately measured to minimise bias? Has a reliable system been established for measuring outcomes?
Did they use objective measurements?
Do the measurements truly reflect what you want them to (have they been validated)?
Were all the subjects classified into exposure groups using the same procedure?
Were the measurement methods similar across different groups in the cohort, or cases and controls?
Were the outcome assessors blinded to exposure to the treatment/intervention?
If cohort, was the follow-up of subjects complete enough? Hint: the persons that are last to follow-up may have different outcomes than those available for measurement.
If cohort, was the follow-up of subjects long enough? Hint: the effects should have had long enough to reveal themselves. In open or dynamic cohort, was there anything special about the outcome of the people leaving, or the exposure of the people entering the cohort?

7. Clear description of data analysis and measurement tools where appropriate

Qual Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?
Is there a reasonably full description of analysis process?
If thematic analysis used, is it clear how themes were developed from the data?
Is it clear how the data presented were selected from the sample? (e.g. selection of quotes used)
Did the researcher examine own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation?

Quant Did they use objective measurements?
Did the measures truly reflect what was wanted (have they been validated)?
Has a reliable system been established for measuring outcomes?
Was there a power calculation?

8. Evidence of critical reflection

Qual Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?
Has the researcher critically examined their role, potential bias and influence during:
- formulation of research questions
- data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- analysis and selection of data for presentation?

Quant Have the authors identified all important confounding factors?
Have they taken account of the confounding factors in design and/or analysis?

9. Inclusion of sufficient original data to mediate between evidence and interpretation?

Both Is sufficient data presented to support the findings?
What extent is contradictory data taken into account/discussed?
Is there adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments?

10. Clear statement of findings and discussion of validity/reliability of results

Both Is there a clear statement of findings?
Is there adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments?
Has the researcher discussed credibility of findings? (For instance, where relevant, triangulation, respondent validation, more than one researcher).
Are the findings discussed in relation to the original research questions?

11. Strengths and limitations stated? (Discussion of possible confounding factors?)

Both To what extent is contradictory data taken into account/discussed?
Were strengths and weaknesses of the study discussed?

Quant Have the authors identified all relevant confounding factors? Hint: Look for restriction in design, and techniques, e.g. modelling, stratified-, regression-, or sensitivity analysis to correct, control or adjust for confounding factors.
Have the authors taken account of the potential confounding factors in the design and/or in their analysis?

Data extraction pro-forma

All relevant findings were systematically extracted using the data extraction pro-forma below.

Citation	
Study design – type of data collected – participants (socio-demographics) – sampling procedure and response rate	
Strength of paper in terms of QR tools (strong/medium/weak/unreliable evidence)	
Location of data collection	
Data collection year	
Type of ASB/disorder/incivility studied	
Major themes identified in the study	
Findings about drivers of perceptions (of ASB?)	
Findings or theory about how to change the drivers of perceptions (of ASB?)	
Strengths of paper (as stated by author)	
Limitations of paper (as stated by author)	
Conclusions of author	
Questions arising for reviewer	

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