

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Antisocial Behaviour Strategy

2020 - 2024



Working together
to keep our communities safe

Dumfries &

Galloway

Together is
Better

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Foreword

This Antisocial Behaviour Strategy provides the framework by which public services, voluntary agencies, private sector and registered social landlords in Dumfries and Galloway will work together to tackle antisocial behaviour across the region over the next five years. It builds upon the strong partnership arrangements which exist and have been proven to deliver a valuable service in our area.

All partners involved in the development of this strategy understand the need to work collaboratively to achieve a common goal of keeping local communities safe and making our public feel safe. We all recognise that tackling the scourge of antisocial behaviour is not the responsibility of one single agency, and collectively this strategy provides a commitment to ensuring that effective information sharing and joint working approaches will continue to prevent and confront problems at an early stage.

We recognise the need to listen and respond to the issues which matter most to our local communities; to involve, empower and inform them to promote community wellbeing and a sense of safety. We will recognise vulnerability and will prioritise our resources to support those in greatest need of protection.

Dumfries and Galloway Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group

Introduction

Antisocial behaviour removes vitality and confidence from individuals and communities, affects health and wellbeing, and has long been recognised as a barrier towards prosperity and ambition.

Dumfries and Galloway's multi-agency Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group, want to see an ambitious, prosperous and confident Dumfries and Galloway where people can achieve their potential and will work together closely as partners to deliver on the outcomes of this strategy.

The Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 defines antisocial behaviour as occurring where any person:

'Acts in a manner that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress; or pursues a course of conduct that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress to at least one person, who is not of the same household as that person.'

This legislation places an obligation upon Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Chief Constable of Police Scotland to provide a written strategy for tackling antisocial behaviour, and it is crucial that we are able to deliver a service that meets our community needs.

It is important that all efforts to tackle antisocial behaviour are seen as part of the wider agenda of keeping people safe and making them feel safe, as outlined in Outcome 6 of the 2017-2027 Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. Everyone in our region should feel safe and be safe. Our efforts will identify and be focussed particularly toward people and neighbourhoods who do not feel that way.

Nobody should have to suffer antisocial behaviour. It has been long recognised that prevention is better than cure and in Dumfries and Galloway we embrace the principles of partnership working and aim to focus efforts and resources on intervention and resolution at an early stage. Doing so reduces the potential for escalation and conflict, builds confidence in local processes, and reduces the duplication of effort associated with failure demand.

Furthermore, we recognise that there are opportunities to make communities more resilient through local empowerment and engagement. Attitudes and perceptions can affect feelings of safety and in that regard, it is important to involve and empower our public to enhance the vibrancy and wellbeing of communities.

This strategy sets out how the Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group will build on multi-agency working to tackle antisocial behaviour and its causes, and continue to make the best possible use of all partners' expertise and resources. The strategy will ensure that the needs of those impacted by antisocial behaviour are central to the delivery of services.

Whilst the strategy sets out our objectives until 2024, the aligned work plan is intended to identify and detail the actions the partnership will commit to undertake on a year by year basis to deliver the strategic objectives. It is accepted that local priorities and concerns will be influenced by changing environments and trends, and a yearly review and publication of a forward-looking work plan will reflect this.



National Context

Delivering a Safer and Stronger Scotland is a strategic objective of the Scottish Government to help communities to flourish, become stronger and safer places to live, offer improved opportunities and a better quality of life. It is this which provides the national context for all our community safety activity.

The Scottish Government monitor progress toward their strategic objectives through the National Performance Framework which sets the targets for local community planning, all aimed at making Scotland wealthier and fairer, smarter, healthier, safer and stronger, and greener. Designing a strategy for antisocial behaviour can impact upon all of these areas but most significantly upon making communities safer and stronger.

The National Performance Framework also sets the national outcomes that support these five strategic objectives. Again antisocial behaviour can impact upon many of the outcomes but most significantly upon the following National Performance Framework outcome:

We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.

The Scottish Government Building Safer Communities partnership programme provides further support and direction to help communities become safer, more resilient, and which:

- addresses underlying causes of crime (and indeed antisocial behaviour)
- helps people to build strong and positive relationships within communities
- reduces opportunity for offending through diversionary activity and bespoke interventions.

The financial pressure on all public services also highlights the need for more cohesive working practices by all involved in this area of work, to improve community safety and wellbeing.

Local Context

Area Profile

Dumfries and Galloway is a primarily rural region with a population of around 149,670; the main towns being Dumfries (population 38,900), Stranraer (population 10,600) and Annan (population 8,000). Nearly half of all people in Dumfries and Galloway (44.9%) live in areas classified as rural (areas with fewer than 3,000 people).

Dumfries and Galloway is, by land area, the third largest local authority area in Scotland, covering 2,380 square miles (8.2% of the total land area of Scotland). Dumfries and Galloway stretches some 115 miles from Portpatrick in the west to Langholm in the east, and over 45 miles from the Ayrshire regional boundary in the north to the Solway coast in the south.

Population density is 60 people per square mile compared with the Scottish average of 168, and almost a quarter of the population (24%) is aged 65 or over. The size of the minority ethnic population was 1,873 or 1.2% of the population at the 2011 Census.

Dumfries and Galloway has 16 data zones in the 20% most deprived in Scotland. In 2013, 7.7% of our population (11,521 people) lived in these areas.

Dumfries and Galloway is assessed to be the third safest Local Authority area in Scotland where 90% of our public have indicated that they feel safe in their neighbourhoods¹.

Antisocial Behaviour in Dumfries and Galloway

The Dumfries and Galloway Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group has agreed a list of behaviours that could best describe antisocial behaviour. This list largely coincides with the behaviours listed in the 2018 Scottish Household Survey and remains flexible. The prevalence of these behaviours varies in different areas of the region.

The Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group employ a range of techniques to profile the nature of antisocial behaviour as it occurs across the region. We share information in accordance with legal frameworks to understand the nature of local problems, assess risk, and direct resources where they are needed most.

The Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2017-2027 provides a framework between the Scottish Government and Community Planning Partnerships about how each will work towards improving outcomes for local people, in a way that reflects local circumstances and priorities.

Noisy Neighbours

Vandalism & Property Damage

Litter & Fly tipping

Neighbour Disputes

Intimidation & Harassment

Substance Misuse & Dealing

Rowdy Behaviour

Deliberate Fire-setting

Animal Nuisance

Non compliance with Covid restrictions

1 2018 Dumfries and Galloway Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Survey



The LOIP identifies the priorities and ambitions we want to achieve for the people of our region. Individual organisations will use this plan to direct and inform their work and use of resources so that we achieve our vision together.

National objectives	Wealthier & Fairer	Smarter	Healthier	Safer & Stronger	Greener
Local vision	Working together to create an ambitious, prosperous and confident Dumfries and Galloway where people achieve their potential				
Local outcomes	<p>Outcome 1 Everyone who needs help to work receives the right support</p> <p>Outcome 2 Learning opportunities are available to those who need them most</p> <p>Outcome 3 Health and wellbeing inequalities are reduced</p> <p>Outcome 4 There is affordable and warm housing for all</p> <p>Outcome 5 The money available to people on benefits and low wages is maximised</p> <p>Outcome 6 People are safe and feel safe</p> <p>Outcome 7 People are well connected</p> <p>Outcome 8 Individuals and communities are empowered</p>				

The strategy supports two key outcomes of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

Outcome 6 : Everyone in our region should be safe from harm. We will focus our services on prevention, protection and making communities more resilient. We know antisocial behaviour can have a debilitating effect on wellbeing so we will focus our work around the most in need and most vulnerable in society.

Outcome 8 : We want to ensure that everyone can make a contribution to their community in our region. We will explore opportunities to do so and will support people to get involved. We want our public to help build a sense of community and to enhance their local services and their voice within them.

There are many other key strategies and plans which contribute to minimising ASB related activities and behaviours and these are attached in **Appendix 3**.



Local Governance and Delivery

Oversight of strategic partnership activity in Dumfries and Galloway is ultimately provided by the Community Planning Partnership Board which brings together representatives from the third, public and private sectors.

Dumfries and Galloway Safer Communities Partnership's remit is to provide oversight to the work of the Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group, who are responsible for maintaining progress against this Strategy's delivery and making recommendations on tactical and operational issues to tackle antisocial behaviour.

Operational activity is co-ordinated at a local level through Community Safety multi-agency Tasking and Co-ordinating (MATAC) meetings held regularly across the region on a locality basis. These meetings formalise local partnership arrangements and adopt a problem-solving approach to consider the most problematic cases. The meetings ensure shared situational awareness, share and maximise use of finite resource, and ensure accountability and progress toward improved outcomes for people and communities affected by antisocial behaviour.

Our Strategic Approach

The key principle to tackling antisocial behaviour is to have a clear understanding of the nature, frequency, location and complexity of the issue.

An important means of identifying the threat posed to safe and secure communities by antisocial behaviour is through ongoing analysis and assessment.

From a range of data held by partner agencies we are able to identify the problems of most concern, where and when they occur, and the sectors of our communities most affected. In this way, we are able to understand problems, prioritise responses and make joint recommendations as to how best resolve them. Our year on year activities are articulated in our Work Plan.

Consultation and engagement

The views of our communities, partners and stakeholders are canvassed through a region-wide Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Survey and have been used to review and inform the Work Plan. This also includes relevant evidence from the 10,000 voices young people's engagement exercise undertaken during 2018.

The assessment and referral processes used in Dumfries and Galloway are a proven method of identifying threats, assessing risks, encouraging prioritisation of tasks and appropriate resource allocation.

Information and views are also gathered through local partnerships, feedback from Elected Members, Community Councils, schools and partner organisations, as well as from individuals, citizens and voluntary groups.

Key indicator

Results from the 2018 Community Safety Survey indicated that 90% of local people felt safe in their neighbourhood. It is known that other factors not necessarily associated with ASB can affect how safe people feel. One such factor is the public health implications to individuals and communities relative to the COVID19 Pandemic, which is a key emerging issue in terms of impacts on communities going forward.

All future surveys, consultation and engagements will therefore need to take account of the affect of the worldwide pandemic.

Partnership working

Collaboration is at the heart of our approach to tackling antisocial behaviour and partner organisations involved agree that in order to deliver this strategy they must be flexible and maintain effective working relationships. This is especially important going forward to maximise the use of limited resources and specialist expertise to respond to changing community profiles and behavioural trends. Membership of the ASB Strategy Group is detailed in Appendix 2.

As a partnership, we will share current and relevant information in accordance with legal frameworks in order to both prevent and respond to antisocial behaviour.



Within Dumfries and Galloway a remedy based approach has been developed to tackle antisocial behaviour involving a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies.

Prioritisation

It is recognised that there are many challenges facing partners and therefore it is necessary to prioritise our activity. Our most vulnerable people and communities will continue to be our focus.

Operating within a pandemic situation can restrict certain interventions, which has been demonstrated in the national response to COVID19 during 2020. This included no home evictions and the re-deployment of staff to protect the most vulnerable in society, taking them away from other key duties such as their agency response to ASB. Each agency will require to critically analysis and assess how they can effectively respond to not only conventionally recognised ASB, but new and emerging ASB that maybe relevant to living and working in a pandemic.

Any contact with victims or perpetrators of ASB require to be done in line with Scottish Government guidance and each agencies health and safety requirements.

We must act in partnership and strive to be flexible and creative in our response to ASB in order to ensure Dumfries and Galloway is, and continues to be one of the safest place in Scotland to live, work and visit.

Community Justice

Community Justice cannot be viewed or addressed in isolation and therefore it is vital that partnership plans which contribute to Community Justice are aligned. We know that many things can impact on the way people behave and on their communities including education (schools and further education), employment services, jobs and employers including emergency services; health, income, housing and lots of third sector/voluntary organisations but the most important thing that influences people are their families and the communities within which they live.

The justice system is very complicated, with different options available at each stage of the journey. There are many decisions to be made from the point of arrest to the decision to charge, whether to proceed to court or divert and what type of sentence to give. Yet there are many things we as communities can and could do before people even get to the stage of formal involvement in the system. Strong, connected communities working together can have a much greater effect on the lives of people than services alone ever could.

We know that 54% of violent crime in Scotland is committed whilst under the influence of alcohol therefore close alignment with the Alcohol and Drug Partnership is important; whilst women involved in the justice system have high levels of trauma and incidences of abuse; linking closely to the work of the local Domestic Abuse Violence Against Women Partnership and the Public Protection Partnership for Dumfries and Galloway.

We recognise that integration/reintegration is vitally important for those involved in the justice system, with the desistance journey having many parallels with the recovery from addiction journey. We continue to support and promote diversion at the front end of the system and throughcare at the back end to achieve the best outcomes for individuals through rehabilitation, families and our communities. This also means recognising the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences on many of those involved and the impact of this on their future outcomes in life. Early intervention, prevention and diversionary activities have a huge part to play in this.

Strategic Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to proactively tackle antisocial behaviour to keep our communities safe and ensure our public feel safe.

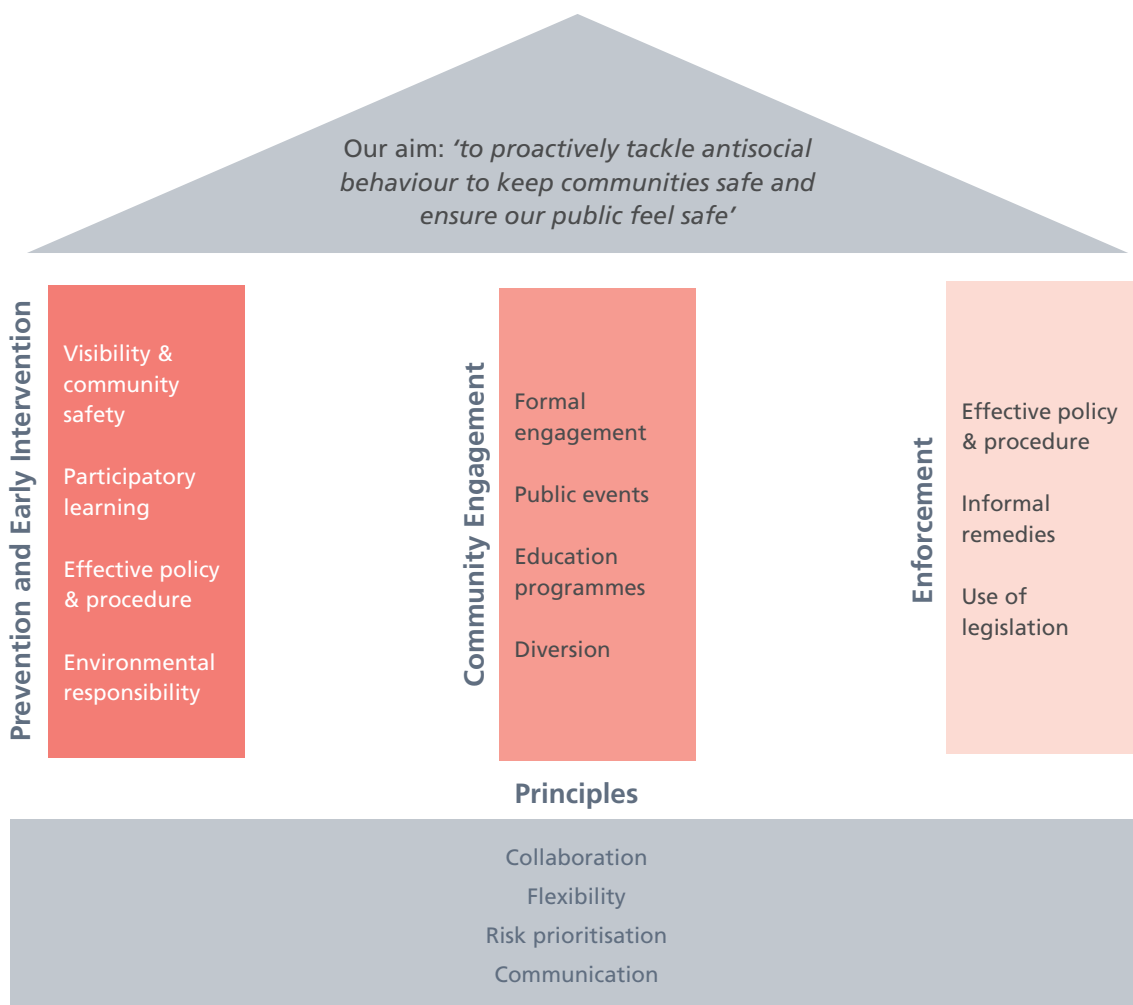
Secondary to the reassurance afforded by a sense of wellbeing and feeling safe, by promoting positive citizenship and building resilience within communities, we aim to effectively prevent, tackle and reduce antisocial behaviour throughout Dumfries and Galloway.

The Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group has devised and endorsed an approach which embraces the following three key themes and with communication integral to each theme:

	Objective	Outcome	Communication
1	Prevention and Early Intervention We will focus on a preventative approach and tackle causes of antisocial behaviour through early intervention	Reduced antisocial behaviour and reduced victimisation	
2	Community Engagement We will engage communities in our work to understand and address the issues affecting local people, and encourage people to lead engaged lifestyles within their local communities	Improved awareness of community needs and increased involvement of communities to address local issues	
3	Enforcement When other interventions have failed or are deemed inappropriate, we will work together to use legislation to deal with persistent offenders	Address persistent offenders and problematic premises or locations	

We aim to achieve this antisocial behaviour strategy by:

- Securing the aims of this partner agency commitment and community engagement in tackling antisocial behaviour at source, identifying the causes, and introducing effective interventions at the earliest possible stage.
- Establishing mechanisms to identify and prioritise antisocial behaviour, by type, by frequency and by area; taking cognisance of vulnerability and deploying resources where they are needed most.
- Determining strategic actions supported by locally-based Community Safety Multi Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Groups (MATAC's), which can tailor local solutions to localised problems.
- Continuing to develop our policies, protocols and procedures to address antisocial behaviour across the region.





Measuring Outcomes

In line with the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan for the region, this Antisocial Behaviour Strategy is firmly committed to an outcome-based approach to planning, delivering and monitoring performance. A Work Plan is aligned to the strategy which details the actions we will take to improve local outcomes. This is our commitment to our local public and stakeholders as to the manner in which we will work together and act to tackle antisocial behaviour.

The Work Plan is a live document which is reviewed annually, to enable partners to tailor services to respond to changing and emerging threats, trends, legislation or society; the overarching aim being to resolve antisocial behaviour as early as possible, using enforcement measures where preventative interventions have failed.

To support this, a number of indicators have been identified which will help evaluate progress over the longer term.

The outcomes which will be used to monitor the success of this strategy, and which are all underpinned by effective communication, are:

	Aim	Measures	Communication
Strategic aim	That members of the public and our communities feel safe	Percentage of residents who feel safe in their neighbourhood	
Prevention and Early Intervention	<p>Demonstrate a clear commitment to preventing ASB, through pre-emptive actions and coordination.</p> <p>Improve our response at an early stage, to effectively reduce number of repeat ASB victims</p>	<p>ASB related complaints</p> <p>Number of repeat victims of ASB</p> <p>Proactive education work undertaken to help improve understanding and awareness of ASB issues and influence positive changes in behaviours</p> <p>Effectiveness of patrolling work undertaken</p>	
Community Engagement	That we have an improved awareness and understanding of community needs and are flexible and responsive to react to emerging issues	<p>The ways we gather information on the extent and effects of ASB</p> <p>Analysis and use of, the information gathered to help inform our approaches and response</p>	
Enforcement	That legislation has been utilised effectively and appropriately to deal with persistent offenders	<p>The number of enforcement measures taken by individual agencies to help reduce the number of complaints from the public</p> <p>The number of cases being escalated to multi agency approach through MATACs</p>	



Data Statement

Tackling antisocial behaviour is increasingly a major part of the work of a wide range of agencies and groups - local authorities, police, registered social landlords, voluntary organisations, and parts of the private sector.

The Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 is intended to help deal with antisocial behaviour more effectively and contains a range of provisions in the areas of justice, the environment, housing and child welfare, all of which are linked to tackling antisocial behaviour. The Act affords powers to facilitate the exchange of information to tackle antisocial behaviour and can be accessed at www.hms0.gov.uk.

Our local partnerships work in accordance with an agreed Information Sharing Protocol. The scope of this protocol is to clarify as far as is possible, the circumstances under which information can be exchanged. A single, joint approach to exchanging information is a highly efficient mechanism for reducing crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour.

We will disclose personal data relating to a perpetrator, alleged perpetrator, victim, informant or witness with the consent of the data subject. We will also disclose information without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so and also an overriding public interest in disclosure. (There must be a lawful basis, such as a "public task" and then a requirement to weigh up the public interest in disclosure. It is a two stage approach)

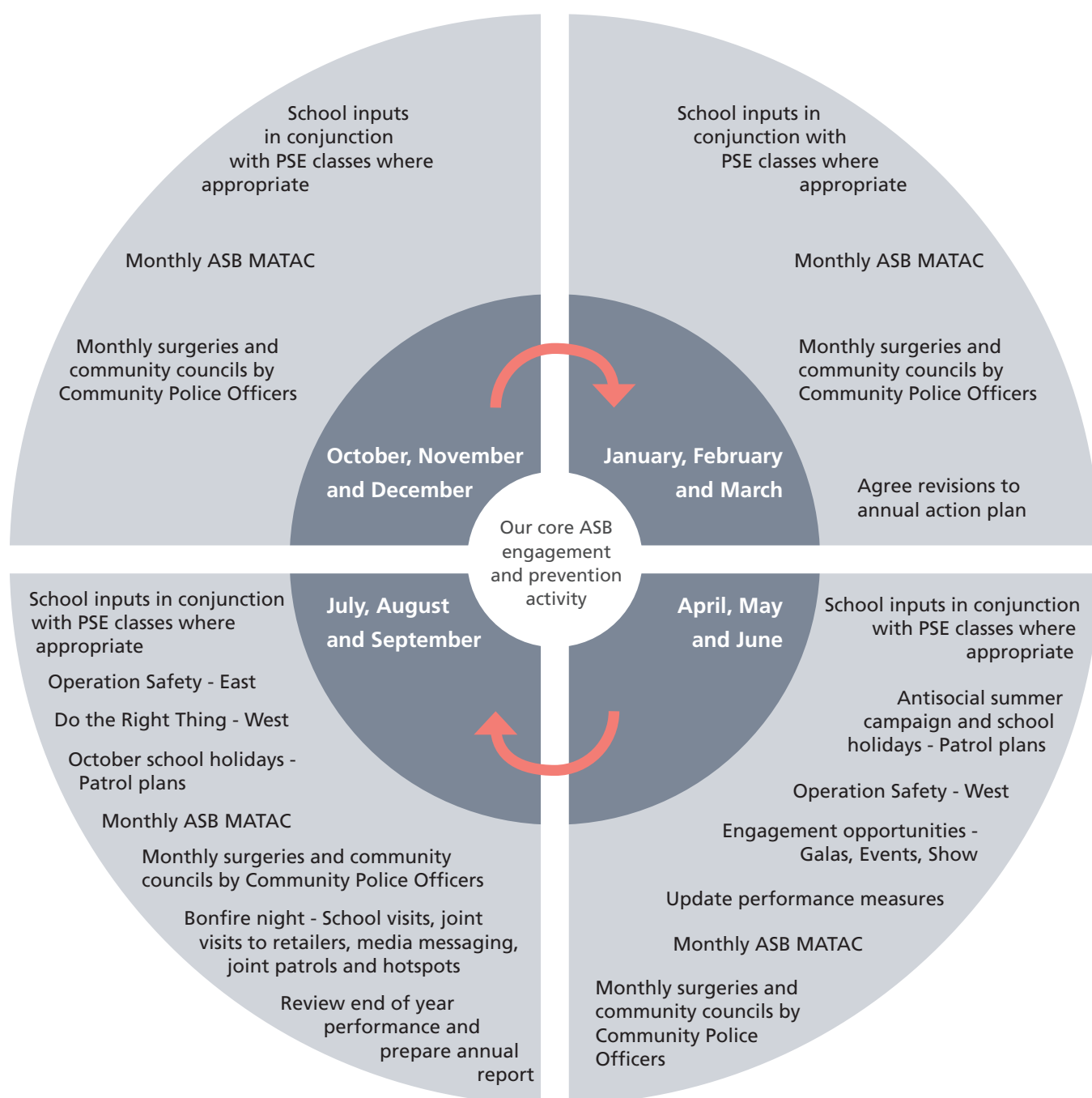
Effective management of antisocial behaviour requires effective sharing of information amongst partners. Scottish Ministers have indicated that unnecessary obstacles to the sharing of that information should be eliminated.

For further information regarding our Information Sharing Protocol, please contact Kirsteen Macintyre, Dumfries and Galloway Council Legal Services, Council Offices, English Street, Dumfries. Kirsteen.Macintyre@dumgal.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Dumfries and Galloway Antisocial Behaviour Strategy

Our 2020 - 2024 Action Plan Calendar



Appendix 2

ASB Multi-Agency Arrangements

ASB Strategy Group

Police Scotland	DGC Community Safety
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	DGC Legal Services
Loreburn Housing	DGC HMO/Landlord Registration
DGHP/Wheatley Group	DGC Trading Standards/ Environmental Health
Irvine Housing Association	DGC Youth Work Service
Home Group	DGC Social Work Services
NHS	DGC Community Justice



Area based Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-Ordination Groups (MATACs)

Area based groups consisting of locally based officers from the organisations/agencies represented on the Strategic Group



Exchange of key
local intelligence/
data



Joint planning
and co-ordination
to prioritise our
response



Defined roles &
responsibilities



Responding to
emerging key
issues/trends

Appendix 3

Links to regional plans and strategies



Appendix 4

Potential future implications of Covid -19

The Virus will impact different groups of people in different ways, and our society will be affected in different ways over time. The Scottish Government and Dumfries and Galloway Council are carefully monitoring the data to monitor the effects upon local communities. The Scottish Government data can be accessed at <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/> and they regularly update this site with new evidence. For example the potential effects of Covid have been divided into the following four subsections by the Government, and to which we have attached basic examples (not an exhaustive list) of how that could influence ASB locally;

Health (COVID)

- Increased numbers of vulnerable people shielding at home, getting out less, leads to reduced confidence and happiness.
- This will have a direct effect on people overall quality of life, and an anticipated reduction in the number of people who will respond favourably to the key ASB information gathering questions, such as 'How safe do you feel in your neighbourhood' etc.
- COVID disproportionately affects the elderly, and grandparents for example can often be the main carers for some of the most vulnerable young people in our area. In the event of lengthy hospitalisation or bereavement the support network for many vulnerable young people can be restricted, increasing the chance of them becoming involved in ASB or crime over these short or long term (see ACES).

Health (non COVID)

- The increased isolation and anxiety felt by many people during periods of restriction, or shielding, is a major issue.
- For persons with anxiety, depression, or mental health issues the Covid situation can amplify and exacerbate feelings of vulnerability, tension, and irritability, and at the same time a reduced tolerance level and lack of access to usual support networks, can lead to an increase in neighbour disputes, noise complaints, complaints about dog fouling, littering etc.
- There are often associated mental health issues of one form or another underpinning or contributing towards many of the higher tariff recurring ASB issues.
- During the tightest lockdown restrictions the Police were seeing a markedly increased number of neighbour complaints from repeat callers.

Society

- A stronger more cohesive society, with Communities pulling together in an altruistic way in a time of national crisis, is naturally more resilient to crime and antisocial behaviour.
- Neighbours and family members looking out for each other, offers more passive and natural surveillance, reducing vulnerability and quickly picking up on and reporting issues.

Economy

- As the economy contracts, and unemployment rises, there is less disposable income to go around and less job prospects for younger people.
- This can lead to feelings of hopelessness and an increased risk of involvement in ASB, through boredom and frustration. That's amplified when young people's schooling is adversely affected.
- Where people have less disposable income to spend on maintaining and up keeping their surroundings, the general appearance of houses, gardens, buildings, streets etc. will drop. Experience has shown that can lead to an increase in vandalism, graffiti, littering etc.

It's important that we continue to anticipate, monitor and consider both the overt and hidden effects of Covid upon the ASB strategy and workplan, to ensure that it remains relevant and responsive to rapidly changing societal conditions.

**If you would like help understanding this or need it in
another format telephone 030 33 33 3000**