



Creating a safer
Cambridgeshire

Review of section 30 Dispersal Order covering Grafton Centre, Parker's Piece and the Christ's Pieces Areas

June 2010

1. Executive Summary

1. Introduction and Background

The aim of this report is:

1. To review the current Section 30 Dispersal Order that applies to an area that includes the Grafton Centre, Parker's Piece and Christ's Pieces.
2. To enable the police to determine whether they will make application to the city council for a new order and if required, the extent of the order.
3. To update city councillors and other stakeholders.

There has been a Section 30 Order in place to tackle street based group anti-social behaviour in the above locations since October, 2006. Groups behaving anti-socially and congregating in residential and busy retail locations across the city, predominately during daylight hours, have been managed since 2004 with the help of dispersal orders. A multi-agency strategy to tackle street based anti-social behaviour has been in place since 2003/04 and dispersal orders have been seen to be an important intervention to apply control to unacceptable behaviours whilst other supportive and management measures were introduced. It was recognised that these would take time to bed in and there would be a lag before their outcomes, if successful, would enable control measures of the type section 30 provide to be relaxed.

Analysis

Data collection and analysis in this report looks at the overall levels of all reported anti-social behaviour in Market, Petersfield and Romsey wards between January and May 2010. Petersfield and Romsey wards are included to see whether there has been an increase in reports in these areas since the dispersal orders, which ran since 2004, ceased in January.

The report then separates and looks in detail at the types of incident that dispersal orders were introduced to address making comparisons with similar periods last year. It then further divides those incidents of ASB looking at where and when they occurred and the types of behaviour exhibited.

Conclusion

The report concludes that the levels of anti-social behaviour being exhibited in the dispersal area which could be addressed by section 30 dispersals have fallen and in terms of their density, are less than in some other parts of Market ward.

It is noted that recent consideration to introduce a dispersal order in the historic city centre was felt unnecessary and unacceptable behaviour could be managed effectively using existing police powers.

For these reasons the police have decided not to request the city council to approve a new dispersal order.

Incident Data and Analysis

Incident Data – All ASB

This section provides information about all ASB¹ between 1st January and 31st May 2010 in the three wards where previous Section 30 Dispersal Orders have operated.

	Period 1					Period 2					Change compared to preceding 5 months
	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	
Market	154	151	153	166	163	114	117	122	185	143	-106 (13.5%)
Petersfield	48	46	68	40	44	48	40	42	37	33	-46 (18.7%)
Romsey	48	59	56	25	31	38	27	38	61	45	-10 (4.6%)
	1,252					1,090					-162 (12.9%)

- Compared to the preceding five month period, total ASB incidents in Market, Petersfield and Romsey have decreased by 162 incidents (12.9%).
- Market Ward accounted for 62% of all ASB in the tri-ward area between January and May 2010.

Data Analysis

Methodology

All ASB incidents² that occurred in Market, Petersfield and Romsey wards between 1st January and 31st May 2010 were extracted.

The following ASB categories were excluded from the dataset:

- Abandoned Vehicles
- Hoax Call to Emergency Service
- Malicious/Nuisance Communication
- Prejudice Incident
- Rowdy/Nuisance - Neighbours
- Rowdy/Nuisance – Fireworks
- Trespass

¹ Data provided by the Constabulary's Corporate Performance Department.

² Closure Class 1 starts with AS

o Vehicle Related Nuisance

The table below shows the ASB incidents (excluding those mentioned in the methodology section) between 1st January and 31st May 2010 for the three wards and also compares the area inside and outside the current Section 30 area within the Market ward.

Ward	Area (hectares)	ASB incidents	ASB density per hectare
Market	169	607	3.6
Petersfield	105	161	1.5
Romsey	148	137	0.9
Section 30 Area	48	164	3.4
Market excluding S30 area	121	443	3.7

- Out of the three wards, Market has the highest density for ASB incidents.
- Within Market ward the density of ASB incidents is slightly higher outside the Section 30 area compared with inside the area.

This table shows the breakdown of ASB incidents (excluding those mentioned in the methodology section) for the three wards compared to the preceding five months and compared to the same period in the previous year.

	Jan – May 2009	Aug – Dec 2009	Jan – May 2010	Change compared to preceding 5 months	Change compared to same period in 2009
Animal Problems	1	0	1	+1 (100%)	-
Begging/Vagrancy	37	56	81	+25 (44.6%)	+44 (118.9%)
Litter	0	0	3	+3 (300%)	+3 (300%)
Noise	38	45	36	-9 (20%)	-2 (5.3%)
Rowdy and Inconsiderate Behav.	967	914	754	-160 (17.5%)	-213 (22%)
Street Drinking	26	51	30	-21 (41.2%)	+4 (15.4%)

- Reports of Rowdy and Inconsiderate Behaviour have decreased by 17.5% compared to the preceding five months, and by 22% compared to the same period last year.
- Incidents classified as Begging or Vagrancy have increased by 25 incidents compared to the previous five months, and by 44 incidents compared to this time last year.
- Recorded incidents of Street Drinking have increased slightly since last year, but decreased compared to the August-December time period. This may reflect seasonal variations as monthly levels were highest in August and September but very low during the cold weather of January and February.

Current 'Snapshot' of Incidents

The findings in this section are based upon reading the free-text section of the anti-social behaviour incidents received by the Constabulary between January and May 2010 in the Wards of Market, Petersfield and Romsey. Whilst this involves an element of subjective judgement by the reader, this is the most accurate method to provide a true flavour of anti-social behaviour.

- 435/1090 (40%) of incidents involved two or more people (i.e. groups where a dispersal would potentially be relevant). Incidents involving single individuals were removed from the sample along with those which occurred in 'private' locations such as houses. The resultant overview is based upon a remaining sample of 401 incidents of group related ASB.

Thematic overview of 'Group' related ASB incidents

Theme	Proportion	Where	When	What
Street life/ Street Drinkers	105 incidents ³ 10% of all ASB	There are two main clusters of incidents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area between Burleigh St. and Parkers Piece e.g. Paradise St. and Adam and Eve St. • The area and side streets encompassed by Sidney St., Kings Parade and Trinity St. <p>There are also smaller clusters in the areas of Fair St. and Manor Place.</p>	Incident levels increased during March, April and May. Peak times are during the day, particularly between 11:00 and 17:00.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents include aggressive begging, being verbally abusive to passers by, urinating in public spaces, sleeping rough, causing damage to property, fighting or arguing and generally being rowdy. • Many members of the public stated that they felt intimidated but some also called to express concern. • Alcohol or being drunk was specifically mentioned in half of the incidents.

³ Whilst 218 incidents were found to relate to street life or street drinkers, over half of these referred to lone individuals typically being drunk and intimidating to members of the public, begging or sleeping rough in locations that were causing a nuisance to local residents and shop owners. Only 105 referred to more than one person in the text.

Theme	Proportion	Where	When	What
Youth	107 incidents 10% of all ASB	Incidents are relatively dispersed and there does not appear to be any persistent hotspot areas. Green spaces or parks in the city and the area around the Mill Pond however, do appear to be popular locations to gather in.	Peak days are Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons through to evenings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups gathering, drinking alcohol and becoming rowdy. Alcohol or drinking was mentioned in 19% of incidents. • Being verbally abusive to members of the public. • People 'free-running' across roof tops and scaling buildings. • Groups causing damage to property or throwing things around. This is sometimes the result of footballs hitting nearby houses.
Violence and aggressive behaviour	80 incidents 7% of all ASB	Predominantly in the city centre area, particularly around Market Square and in the vicinity of the main pubs and clubs.	Peak times are the early hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings as well as the early hours of Tuesday.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two or more people fighting in the street. • Few incidents specifically mention the influence of alcohol but the times and locations of most of the incidents tend to infer that this type of violent group ASB is linked to people making their way home from licensed premises.
Other	109 incidents 10% of all ASB	Incidents are largely spread out across the area. There are no really persistent hotspots but it is of note that some of the locations relate to the night-time economy such as licensed premises, taxi ranks and take-aways.	There are no specific peak times although incidents do appear to increase during the afternoon and into the evening. Calls are highest on Saturdays.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People arguing in the street or being verbally abusive to passers by. • Calls complaining about the noise being caused by groups of people or house parties that have spilled out into the street and disturbed residents. • Groups causing damage to nearby properties or vehicles. • General drunken nuisance behaviour or drinking in the street. Alcohol is specifically mentioned in just under a third of incidents. • People using BBQs or lighting fires in the green spaces.

Current use of Section 30 Dispersal Order

This section draws information from a variety of sources captured by the police. Please note, there may be other occasions when the Section 30 Dispersal Order has been used but it may have only been captured in the officers pocket note book.

Section 30 Dispersal Orders implemented between 01/01/10 and 31/05/10

Source of information	Number of Dispersals
Street life officer log	35
Op Viking incident log (CC-28042010-0302)	3
ASB action plan	11
TOTAL	49

Arrests for breach of Section 30 Dispersal Order between 01/01/10 and 31/05/10

Source of information	Number of Arrests
Custody data	3
TOTAL	3

Police 'Streetlife' Officers - Operational Assessment

The city's two 'streetlife' officers report consistent and positive improvements in the behaviour of individuals and groups of people usually associated with daytime anti-social behaviour; that which Section 30 Orders were introduced to address.

Working with the Street Outreach Team and reporting to the multi-agency problem solving group that seeks to address the behaviour and needs of individuals that lead a streetlife existence, they report good relationships with the resident group that has been in the city for several years. Whilst the numbers coming to and leaving the city fluctuate, the officers report that the resident group does apply a positive influence to new arrivals helping to create an understanding about what is and what is not acceptable. The officers report that they rarely need to use their powers and are able to manage situations through effective dialogue built on trust and understanding.

Partner information and Intelligence

The capture of other data that would help to corroborate or otherwise police recorded data is proving to be problematic. The use of CCTV and 'Street drinking Counts' to identify locations, numbers of persons and frequency of incidents is not considered robust enough to draw analytical conclusions.

There is nevertheless a view held by those monitoring the city through the eyes of CCTV that supports the police data analysis that the number of incidents of the type that Section 30 would deal with has reduced since April. The expected rise in daytime anti-social behaviour usually associated with longer daylight hours, warmer weather and increases in transient people coming to the city has not materialised.

The Street Outreach Team also report improvements in levels of anti-social behaviour associated with their client group.

Community Intelligence and Impact

The view of traders in the area also supports the improvement noted by others.

Summary

- Between 1st January and 31st May 2010 the number of all ASB incidents has decreased, compared to the preceding five months.
- Within Market ward, the density of ASB incidents is slightly higher outside the Section 30 area compared with inside the area.
- Reports of rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour have decreased compared to the preceding five months and the same period in the previous year, while begging or vagrancy has increased.
- About half of those incidents involving 'Streetlife' refer to one person only as opposed to groups.
- There is no particular type of group who are disproportionately causing ASB incidents to be reported.
- Alcohol has been highlighted as a common contributing theme.

Recommendation

Having taken all of the above into consideration it has been decided not to request the city council to approve a new 30 Order. The existing order will therefore expire on 3rd July 2010.

Current levels of anti-social behaviour exhibited in this and other areas of the city will be addressed using other police powers.

Levels of anti-social behaviour will continue to be monitored and reported to Area Committees and other forums.

In the event that problems re-occur to levels that cannot properly be addressed by using existing powers, urgent consideration will be given to apply for dispersal powers in accordance with the joint protocol and operational guidance agreed. It then concentrates on those types of incident that dispersal orders have been introduced to address between the police and city council.

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