

Estimating the scale and nature of street based anti-social behaviour in Cambridge City

Report Date: August 2013

Section1: Summary

The following points are key findings from the analysis in support of wider Cambridge City Council and Community Safety Partnership work to reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB).

ASB in Cambridge City has shown reduction over the recent years. This is in line with the County and National trend.

It is worth remembering that ASB is affected by an individual's perceptions and experiences. What is considered anti-social to one person is not by another. Feedback from surveys about what is most disruptive to the majority should be kept in mind when planning services and interventions. This way a response will be proportionate to the problem.

ASB does not occur uniformly across the City and geographic hotspots exist. Heavily used areas are prone to higher levels of ASB particularly when used by a variety of groups of people. Cambridge City has a large number of green spaces which are popular with residents and tourists.

Street drinking and street based ASB is a problem faced in other locations across the country. Street drinkers is a term that is used to homogenise a diverse range of people. There may be methods of engagement that are more suitable for some people than others. An individual's needs should be taken into consideration to achieve the most appropriate outcome; this may be support, enforcement or a combination of both.

Detailed analysis of ASB within Cambridgeshire City revealed the following key findings;

- ASB associated with the keywords begging, homeless, drunk, alcohol and abusive language accounted for 47% of all ASB within the 'extended city centre area' in 2012/13.
- ASB associated with just begging and homeless accounted for 16% of the total ASB within the extended city centre area' in 2012/13.
- ASB associated with all the keywords recorded a reduction of 26% between 2011/12 and 2012/13. Whilst ASB associated with begging and homeless reduced by 12% over the same period.
- It was notable that over a half of the 100 incidents in the sample was linked to alcohol. In particular, issues of street drinking and the night time economy.
- Some of the street drinking is clearly linked with individuals that have a street based lifestyle. Not all members of the street life community are homeless and not all members of the groups mentioned are causing disruption.

- Peaks for ASB across the day can be seen, those associated with the night time economy tend to be between 11pm and 4am, although there is likely to be some contribution to the early evening peak.
- Of the incidents reviewed it was evident that a quarter related to begging or those thought to be homeless.
- Certain individuals that are known to services appear to cause a substantial quantity of work. Seven repeat offenders were linked with 7% of ASB with keywords within the 'extended city centre area'.

Section2. Background

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a profile of street based anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Cambridge City over a two year period (2011/12 – 2012/13). The focus is on the central parts of the City (as defined in Appendix 1 and for this report will be referred to as 'extended city centre area').

The report reviews national data and case studies as a means of providing a comparison and context for the local picture. Further key findings from analysis of police recorded ASB for the relevant two year period are included.

An overview of all local ASB is included to enable the scale of street based ASB to be estimated, as well as in-depth analysis of cases and geographic areas.

2.2 Methodology

Cambridgeshire Constabulary record incidents of ASB, in three categories in accordance with the national guidance: nuisance, personal and environmental. However, for the purposes of this analysis these groups do not provide enough detail to understand the nature of street based ASB within the city. Therefore the data was analysed in the following ways:

- An overview of all ASB over a two year period (2011/12 and 2012/13)
- Geographic information was used to extract only ASB incidents within a certain area – known as the 'extended city centre area'.
- A keyword search of the free text field using: begging, homeless, alcohol, abusive language and drunk within the 'extended city centre area'
- Analysis of a subset of the data from the keyword search examining incidents containing begging and homeless within the 'extended city centre area'.

It is worth remembering that ASB incident data are not an accredited national statistic because of well-known problems: the data is not subject to the requisite level of data assurance, there are problems with multiple reporting of a single incident, and inconsistencies exist between constabularies regarding reporting.

Section 3: Analysis

3.1 Evidence from Elsewhere

National picture

The following are key findings from the Crime Survey England & Wales 2011/12. It should be noted that respondents are more commonly asked about drinking related behaviour in general and that responses relate to that rather than any specific groups causing, or locations of, ASB.

Drink related behaviour and groups hanging around on the street:

Individuals

- 15% of respondents reported a high level of *perceived* ASB (an indicator developed from the averaging of responses to seven questions)
- Drink-related behaviour and [non-specific] groups hanging around in the streets were the two most commonly reported types of ASB experienced/witnessed, 11% and 12% of respondents respectively.
- A majority of respondents that experienced/witnessed drink related, or groups hanging around in the streets (82% and 76% respectively), reported that it had little or no effect on their daily routine
- A majority reported 'low' impact on their quality of life of these ASB types (74% and 68% respectively), but 22% and 25% reported moderate impact.

**Note here that 'groups hanging around on the street' were not necessarily drink related and had a greater effect than drink related behaviour. This could perhaps be because large groups are intimidating/take up space/are noisy.*

Businesses

- 12% of all businesses experienced ASB within the previous 12 months
- 35% of these businesses (i.e. 4.2%) reported being impacted by drink related behaviour and groups hanging around on the street, but again this refers to the general population and cannot be linked directly to street-life.
- These numbers may be influenced heavily by hospitality trade businesses, 43% of which reported issues with drink related behaviour.
- Likewise the retail and wholesale sector reported high amounts of ASB from groups hanging around on the streets (40%)

Street life

- ASB by members of the street-life community (i.e. begging, vagrancy or homeless people) were witnessed by less than 1% of respondents
- Also not directly attributable to the street-life community, 4% of respondents reported being intimidated, verbally abused or harassed on the street. It is likely a proportion of this will be associated with individuals that have a street based lifestyle; however there was insufficient evidence to infer any further detail.

Regional examples of street-life or street drinking associated ASB

Norwich:

- Anti-social drinkers (generally) are currently a police priority
- Goal is to reduce street drinking [assume in DPPO area], by confiscating alcohol, and reducing the impact on local residents and businesses.
- Patrols have been increased in known hotspots and 200 bottles and cans were seized in three weeks according to recent press.

Hounslow (2005):

- Conducted an assessment /mapping of the nature and prevalence of the street drinking problem.
- Found several types of street drinking (drinkers), not just street life community
- Majority interviewed were not engaged with local alcohol services.
- Public concern was mainly about the visibility and perceptions, most felt they required 'help'.
- Hounslow found evidence from areas that had experienced street drinking that suggested a multi-agency approach – enforcement tactics, environmental improvements, and service provision.
- 54% of street drinkers were in receipt of job seekers benefit.
- 31% of street drinkers were also rough sleeping; a further 8% were squatting.
- Main reasons given for street drinking were: can't afford to drink in pubs, loneliness/isolated /to meet friends and being in relaxing /calming places.
- The target population were relatively static in nature and size and therefore it was felt that an intensive period of co-ordinated action would have an impact on the local problem in Hounslow.
- Accompanying figures from this report can be found in Appendix 2

Consultation document by Ranzetta consulting aka Alcohol Academy

The general message from the document was that whilst there are competing objectives (harm reduction versus addressing ASB) both can be addressed with a careful and co-ordinated approach.

Street drinking:

- Involves complex issues and there are no quick wins
- Often allotted a disproportionate amount of attention due to high visibility and outspoken local resident groups
- Street drinkers are often treatment resistant
- Street drinkers is a term that is being used to homogenise a diverse range of subsets, all with their own complex set of needs

Enforcement/interventions

- DPPO'S – 700 zones across the country, very popular. Often used by partners to address street drinking ASB. However, zones can be misinterpreted as zones where alcohol is 'banned' and policing can be resource intensive
- Dispersal zones – reduce loitering by groups of 2 or more – a temporary measure - used where ASB is a problem.
- ASBO's – individual focus – difficult to obtain if not in conjunction with another conviction

- Environmental controls – e.g. removal of benches, adding CCTV etc may also cover licensing restrictions of premises associated with areas of high ASB – working with licensed premises owners.
- Case management of key individuals
- Alternative spaces – wet centres – may reduce street drinking during opening hours - Ranzetta claim little evidence of positive impact and suggest designated ‘alternative areas’ that are less formal.
- Alcohol Treatment Requirement (ATR) for offenders with identified alcohol problems.
- Reconnections – case managing individuals to re-engage with ‘society’ in places where they are most likely to succeed. These include the controversial example of helping those from A8 nations find work in their home countries.

3.2 Cambridge City Analysis

Overall police recorded ASB has been decreasing over the last few years. It has been a priority of the Community Safety Partnership and a variety of interventions have been used to tackle the cause, the individuals’ involved and public perception.

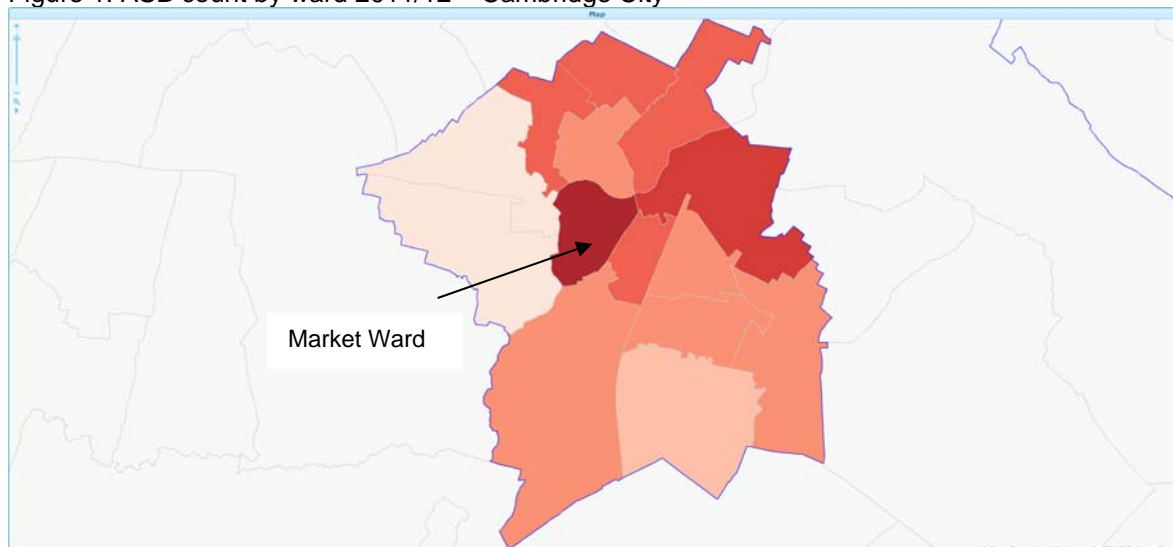
The following findings from the analysis aim to provide greater understanding of the nature of the problems within the centre of Cambridge.

- **Cambridge City- Overview**

Cambridge City accounted for 27.9% (6,355) of the ASB incidents in Cambridgeshire in 2011/12. The highest counts of incidents were in Market (1,237), Abbey (671) and Arbury (495) wards. These wards are also the highest in the County. As Cambridge City has a vibrant day time and night time economy this is unsurprising. It has high footfall both during the day and night and services the need for a wide range of people.

The map below shows, in broad terms, the distribution of ASB in the City. It highlights the high volume of incidents in Market ward and the reason for the focus on this geographic area.

Figure 1: ASB count by ward 2011/12 – Cambridge City¹



- **Keyword Dataset**

Police records of ASB were extracted based on a search for five keywords; begging, homeless, alcohol, abusive language and drunk. These have been some of the issues most raised as a concern.

ASB with these keywords accounted for nearly half of ASB within the 'extended city centre area'. Understanding the nature of these ASB incidents is important if appropriate interventions delivered and reductions are to be made.

Analysis of anti-social behaviour reported within the Cambridge City 'extended city centre area' revealed a higher proportion of 'nuisance' behaviour compared to 'personal' ASB. This is to be expected as there is likely to be fewer residential/ neighbour disputes reported in this location.

Analysis of ASB in 2011/12 and 2012/13 revealed reductions of all ASB. The reduction seen in reported ASB incidents containing the keywords 'begging' and 'homeless' was not as large as the overall reduction of ASB, or ASB associated with all keywords (see table 1).

Table 1: Street-life associated ASB incidents within the 'extended city centre area', determined from keyword search

Year	All ASB	Begging/homeless	Proportion of total	All keywords	Proportion of total
2011/12	2,069	286	13.8%	987	47.7%
2012/13	1,572	251	16.0%	732	46.6%
% change	-24.0%	-12.2%		-25.8%	

Keyword² analysis of free text fields for ASB incidents enabled some disaggregation of the types of nuisance ASB reported. Further analysis was also conducted to provide context of what types of incidents are most common within the keyword subset. A hundred cases were reviewed by a member of the Research and Performance team and the project lead. A query was also run using

¹ Image taken from Cambridgeshire Community Safety Atlas
<http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/interactive-maps/crime>

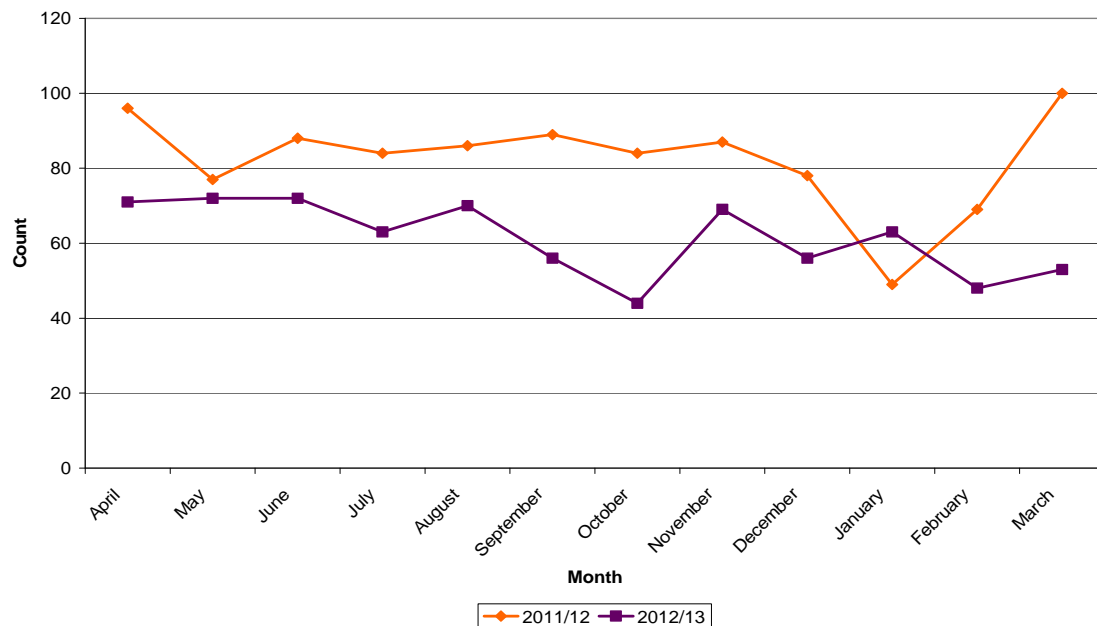
² Keywords used in search were homeless, abusive language, drunk, begging and alcohol

only homeless and begging as keywords. Separating these keywords differentiated street-life related incidents and street-drinking incidents.

Peak Times

Figure 2 shows the monthly breakdown for both years. There is no clear seasonal pattern consistent across both years. It is possible that weather patterns had an influence each year. Typically cooler months had slightly lower in ASB. There is no apparent reason for the peak in March 2012 and it is not reflected in 2013.

Figure 2: Monthly recorded ASB containing the keywords within the 'extended city centre area'



Analysis of weekdays on which ASB occurred revealed Friday – Sunday as the only days with any particular difference from other days, which recorded a slightly higher proportion of incidents (see figure 3). This may reflect the increase in footfall in the City over the weekend, with the increase on a Friday night possibly relating to the impact of the night time economy on ASB.

Figure 3: Days of the week for recorded ASB containing the keywords within the “extended city centre area” area

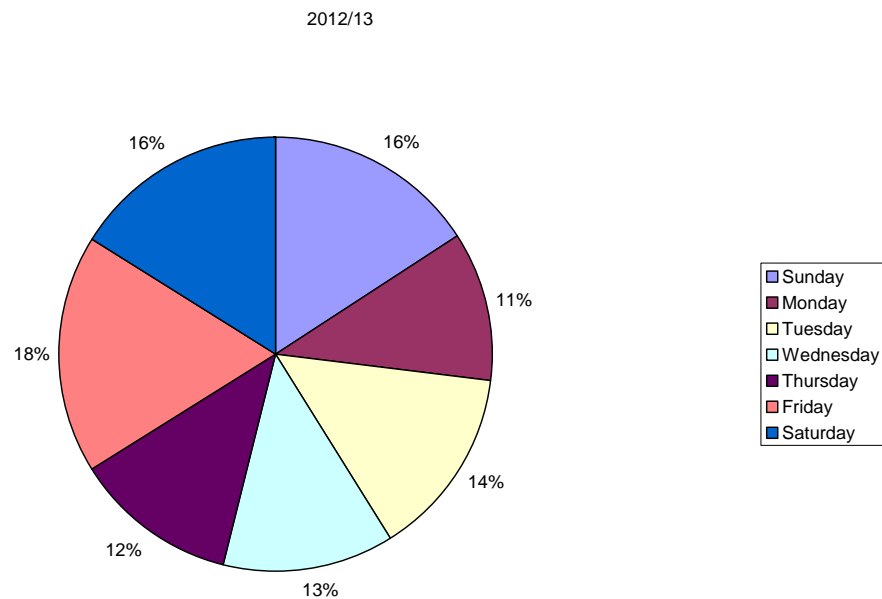
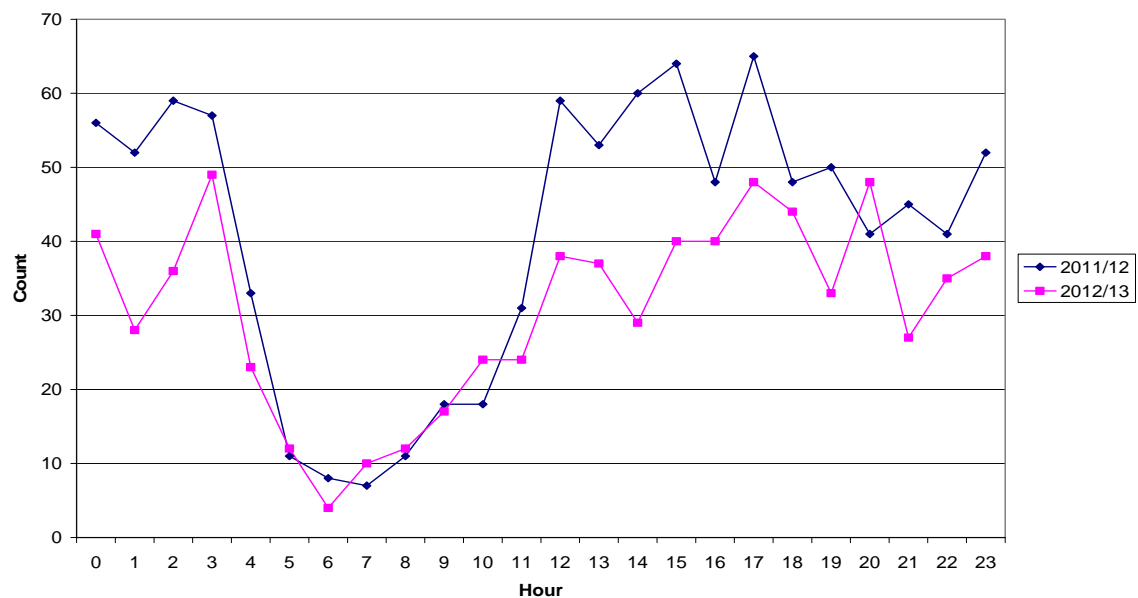


Figure 4 gives some additional weight to the consideration that a considerable proportion of ASB within the ‘extended city centre area’ could be related to the night time economy with clear peaks in recorded ASB at between midnight & 1am and 3 & 4am.

Increased levels of incidents are also seen during the afternoon and early evening. There are several probable factors here. Late afternoon will see commuters moving around the City and a general increase in people trying to use the same space at the same time. It is felt by officers that individuals who are likely to beg are aware of the commuter routes and are there and more visible. This is also a time when children and young people are in transit from school to home, although within the City centre they may represent only a small number of people.

Early evening will again be a time when different groups of people are within the City centre, businesses closing for the day, those starting to frequent the licensed premises could all be exposed or cause ASB.

Figure 4: Hour of the day for recorded ASB containing all the keywords within the “extended City centre” area



Geographic distribution of incidents

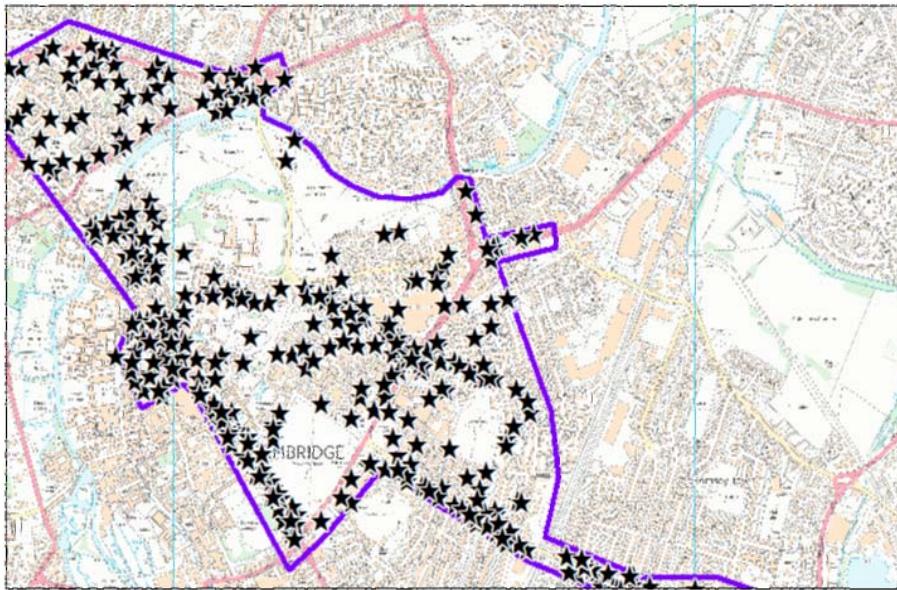
The maps below (figure 5) show the location of ASB incidents in Cambridge City and demonstrate that ASB within the City and ‘extended city centre area’ includes issues beyond the scope of this report.

The first Map shows those incidents that contained the keywords and occurred within the area of interest. The second map shows all ASB incidents over the two year period.

What can be seen from them is that other ASB occurs within the area of interest. It is possible that some of this ASB might be related to alcohol, or street based ASB, but has not come within the definition used within this report. A proportion of these incidents will be quite unrelated to this project and involve a wide range of problems and groups of people.

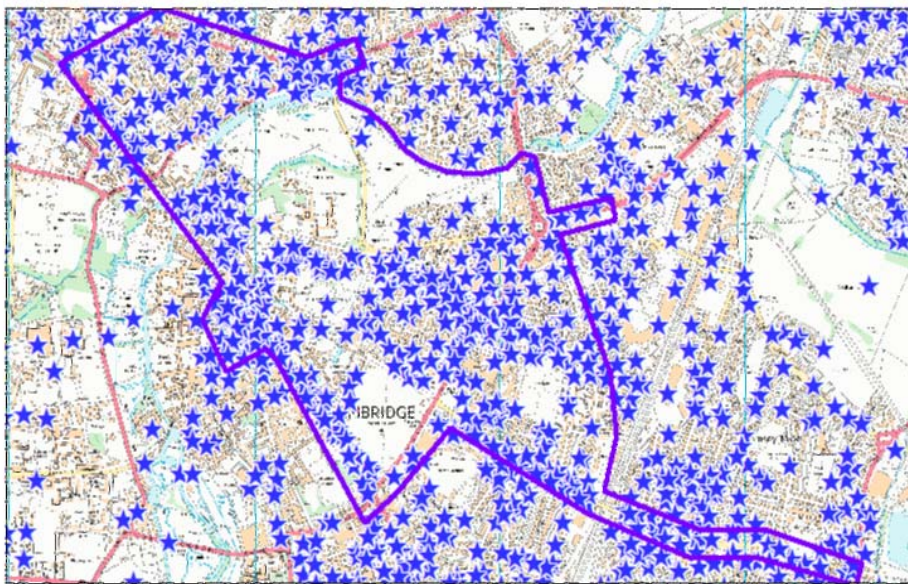
Further there could be some incidents of street based ASB that sit just outside the designated area of interest for this project. Known hotspots for street ASB and problem areas have been included (hence the unusual shape of the ‘extended city centre area’).

Figure 5: Maps showing location of ASB incidents- 2011/12 & 2012/13 combined



ASB within the 'extended city centre area' and containing key words - 2011/12 and 2012/13

All ASB recorded during 2011/12 and 2012/13



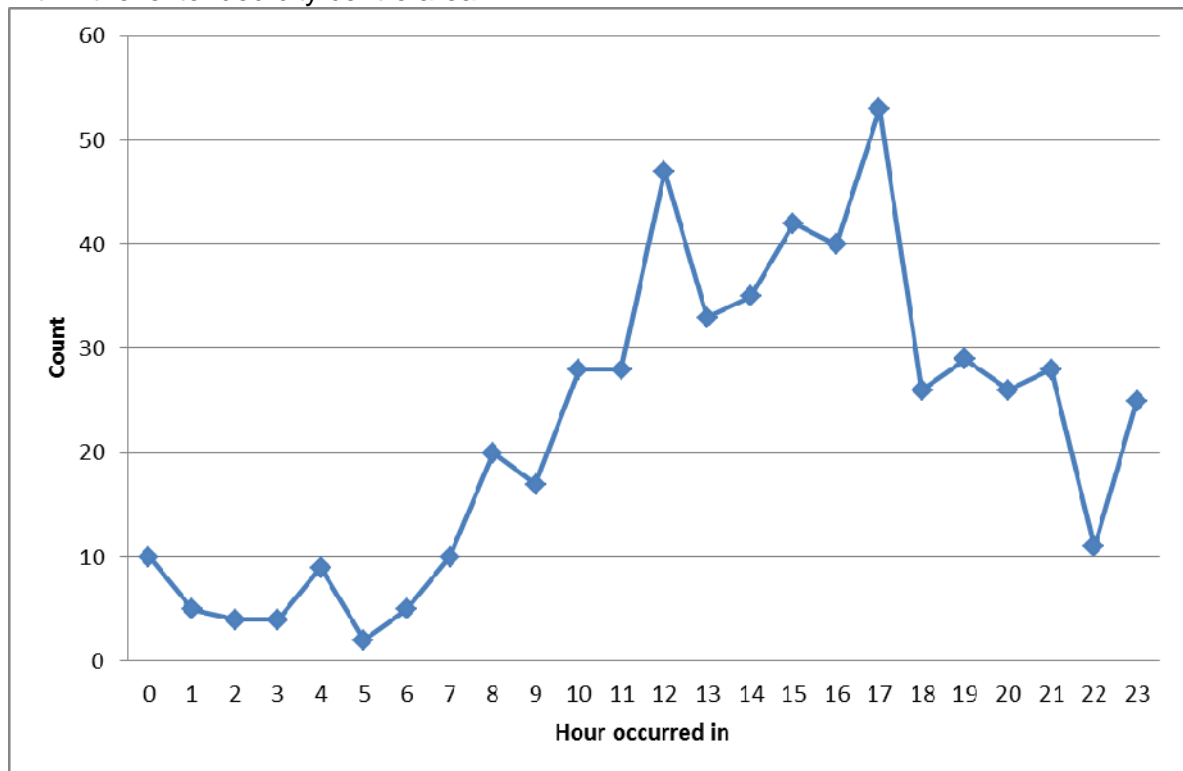
© Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 100023205

- **Rough Sleeping**

Rough sleeping is often quite hidden with individuals finding out of the way places such as garages, behind shops and car parks. Areas more frequently used are commercial properties but residents also report finding people sleeping rough in residential doorways or parking areas. Some residents report feeling scared or intimidated, however, given the low number of reports to the police for rough sleeping, it would appear to remain 'below the radar' in most cases. Outreach work continues to be the key method of engaging with these individuals.

The figure 6 shows a slightly different picture of the peak times of ASB, including keywords begging and homeless, than that of ASB with all keywords. In particular there is no peak between midnight and 4am. Based on the time the reports start to increase and the peak time it would seem reasonable to conclude that a large proportion of reporting of rough sleeping by homeless people and begging are from those in transit to and from work.

Figure 6: Hour of the day for recorded ASB containing keywords begging and homeless within the 'extended city centre area'



- **Analysis of sample**

A random sample of 100 cases within the 'extended city centre area' that contained one or more of the five keywords was examined in detail to further understand the nature of the problems within Cambridge City.

Key Findings

Incidents were classified in two ways to enhance the understanding of where things took place and the types of incidents they were. Results are summarised in table 2 below. Problems with classifying incidents were due to the level of reporting and the recording of detail for incidents. General public calling the

constabulary did not always answer all questions and staff receiving the call recorded as much as possible but incidents were not always clear.

Location type

Of the 100 incidents reviewed 66 could be classified as occurring in the street. Not all ASB that is reported, even within the city centre, occur on the street. Examples include residents dissatisfied with the City Council and causing a disruption on site, users of the night-time economy causing a disturbance within a premises, a fight within a residential location and a theft in a shop. This highlights some of the issues in relying purely on number of incidents of ASB when describing the problem: not all incidents within the area of interest and with the keywords fit into clear and separate categories.

Incident type

A quarter (25) was related to the night-time economy, not all of which occurred on the street. These typically involved drunk individuals causing a disturbance within or while being ejected from a licensed premises.

Nearly a quarter (23) was related to 'street drinking' whilst there is a temptation to equate street drinking with members of the street life community, due to the nature of Cambridge City this is not true for all cases. This is also supported by previous reports from Hounslow and the CSEW. A number of occasions of street drinking related to groups of people drinking; some were students, some were related to international football games, or balls and parties. Descriptions of the groups did not always make it clear who was involved just the impact that the drinking was having on the informant, often due to increased noise and abusive language, which was not always directed at members of the public.

A quarter (25) of incidents were associated with at least one of the following; begging, rough sleeping/ homeless, known members of street life communities. Informants are not always aware of the identity of the individuals causing concern and therefore some incidents may cross into the street life category, but the information is not contained within the record. This therefore may lead to an underestimate of ASB associated with problematic individuals.

Within the sample only 4 incidents related to young people, 2 of which were related to underage drinking.

A small but notable proportion of incidents were not actually ASB, including an assault and a theft, or were calls that upon investigation by the police were revealed to be something else e.g. a fight within an house of multiple occupancy (HMO).

Table 2: ASB by incident and location type within the 'extended city centre area'

Incident Type	Street based ASB			Total
	Yes	No	Not known	
Alcohol related disorder		2		2
Begging	4			4
Drunk people		2		2
Group hanging around		1		1
Homeless person/people	6	5		11
Night-time economy	14	11		25
Other not ASB		4		4
Other nuisance	1	5		6
Rough sleeping	3			3
Street drinking	23			23
Street life	11	1		12
Unknown			3	3
Young people	4			4
Grand Total	66	31	3	100

It is clear from these findings that alcohol is a substantial underlying issue in relation to ASB within the 'extended city centre area'. With at least 54 of the 100 incidents reviewed being associated with alcohol.

- **Repeat offenders**

As part of the analysis a detailed search was conducted of seven individuals known to agencies for causing repeated problems and nuisance. The aim was to establish if a small number of individuals cause a disproportionate level of ASB.

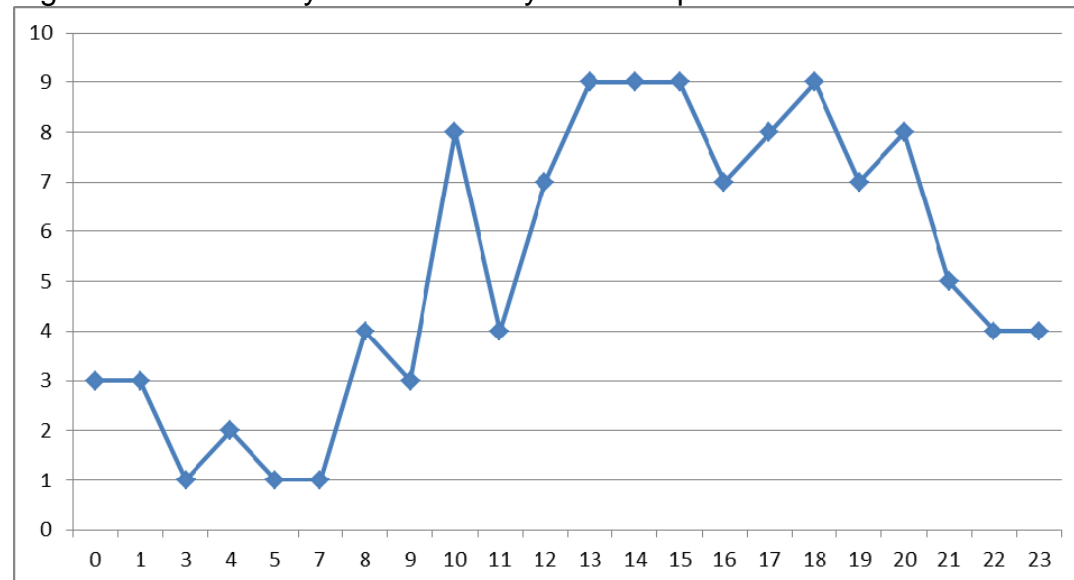
Over both years their names appear 116 times within the comments of ASB incidents in 2011/12 and 2012/13. This is 3% of all ASB and 7% of ASB with keywords within the 'extended city centre area'. A substantial number of incidents are not linked to a named individual. Therefore establishing what proportion of incidents an individual or group is associated with is extremely difficult. Some individuals were linked to 30 incidents by name within the two year period.

Collecting this type of data is time consuming and requires reading all incidents or using names to extract the relevant incidents. The second method was used in this circumstance; the drawback is that this relies on the names being consistently entered within the police system. If time had allowed, further searches could have been run with possible variations on spelling on all seven individuals. This may have produced a slightly higher (and therefore more accurate number of incidents) but was beyond the scope of this paper.

As an example seven spelling variations for the surname of one individual were checked. This produced an additional nine incidents, within the two year period. Taking the total from 30 to 39 incidents linked to the same person.

Analysis of the 116 incidents of ASB linked with the seven problem individuals known to services included time of day to increase the understanding of when peak times were. Due to the small numbers caution must be taken when interpreting the chart below. The number of incidents starts to increase in late morning and fluctuate during the day and evening but reduces during the night.

Figure 7: Incidents by hour in the day for the repeat offenders



Case Study Example

A case study of one of the more problematic individuals is included below

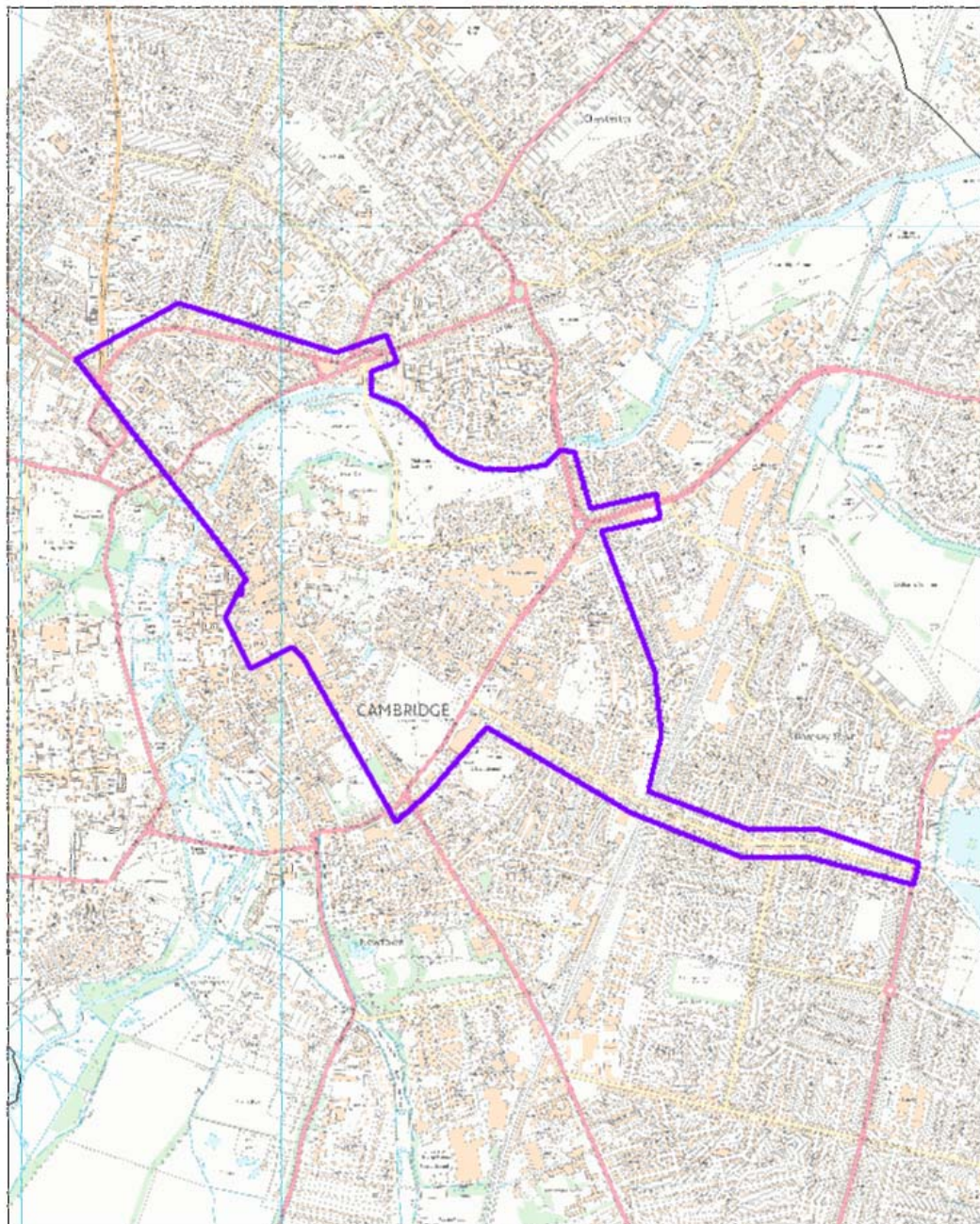
Person A had 39 incidents on the system in the 2 years sampled. It fair to say this is probably less than he actually committed, but those are the ones where his surname, with either the correct spelling or one of seven variations, were included.

Several of the incidents refer to begging, there is definitely evidence that he is actually stopping people and begging rather than just sitting with a cap or sign. There were also several incidents of aggressive behaviour including shouting at people including street cleaners and throwing rubbish at houses. Not all direct 'victims' reported, witnesses also reported seeing the behaviour, demonstrating that one individual's behaviour can affect several others. Further there are also incidents where he was verbally abusive and 'accosting' female students. Most of the incidents were in 2012. Most occurred during daylight hours.

Appendix 1: Map of 'extended city centre area' location

Rationale for the shape of the 'extended city centre area': The area of interest was agreed based on feedback from officers and intelligence relating to key hotspots for ASB. In particular the City centre itself, Mill Road, Mitchams Corner, the Grafton centre and key green spaces were included.

"extended town centre" for examination of street based ASB



Produced by Cambridge County Council, Research & Performance team

© Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 100023205

Appendix 2: Extract from Hounslow report

Figure 7: Average number of incidents of street drinking in Hounslow during different times of day, from October 2004 – October 2005.

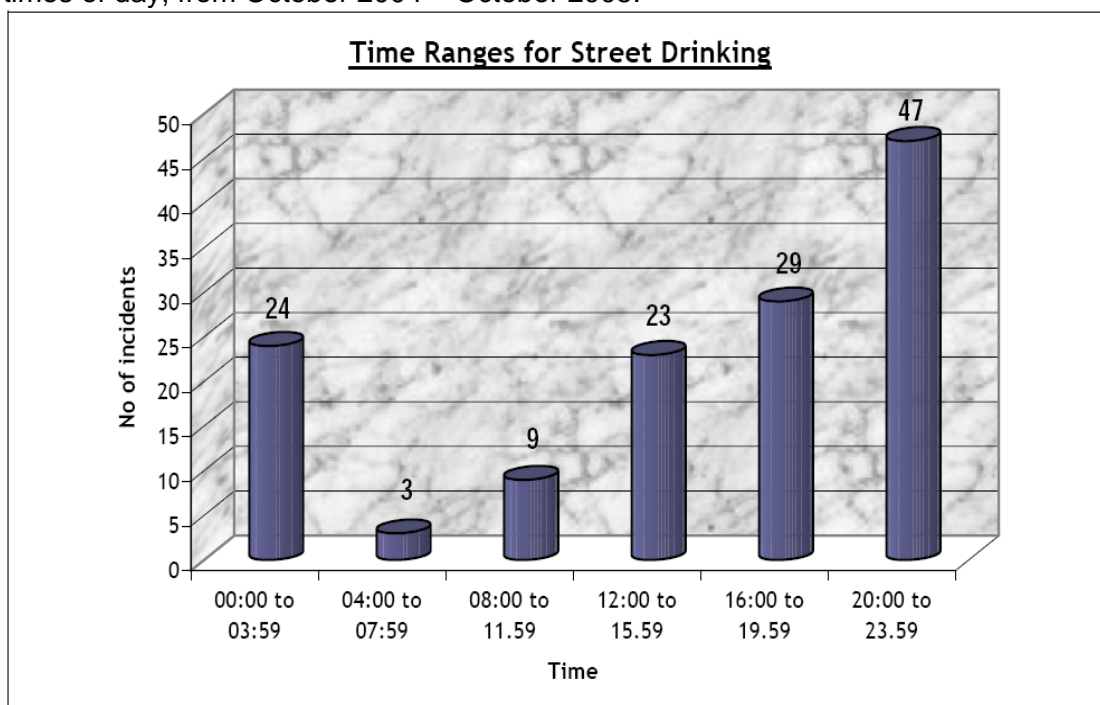
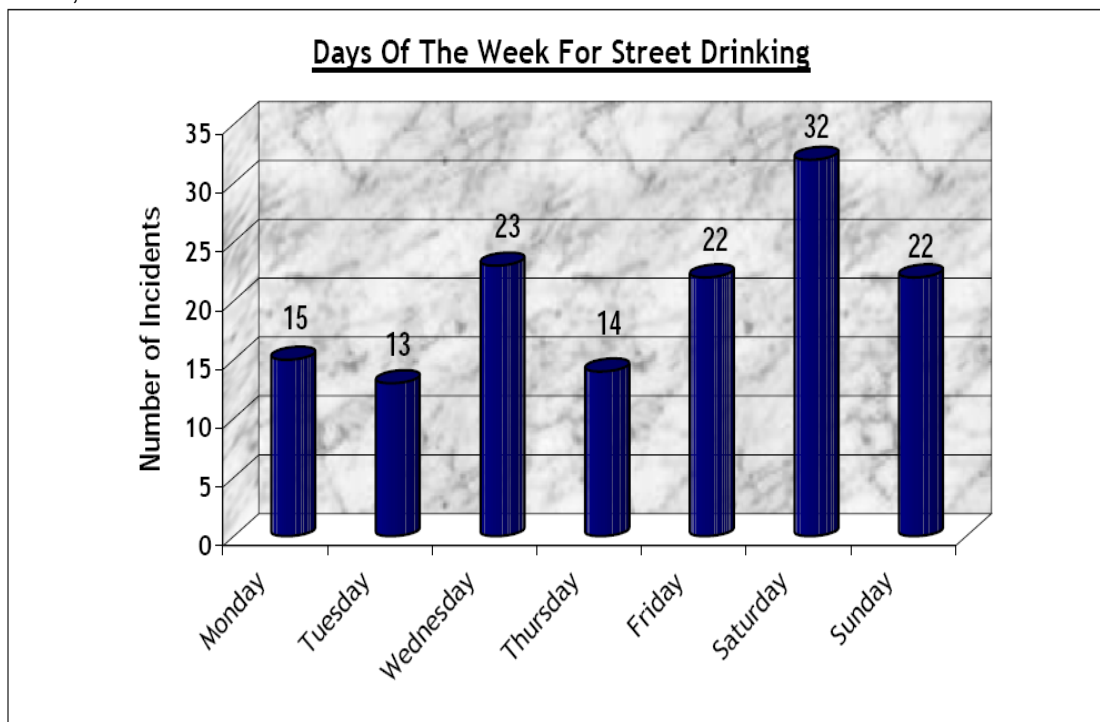
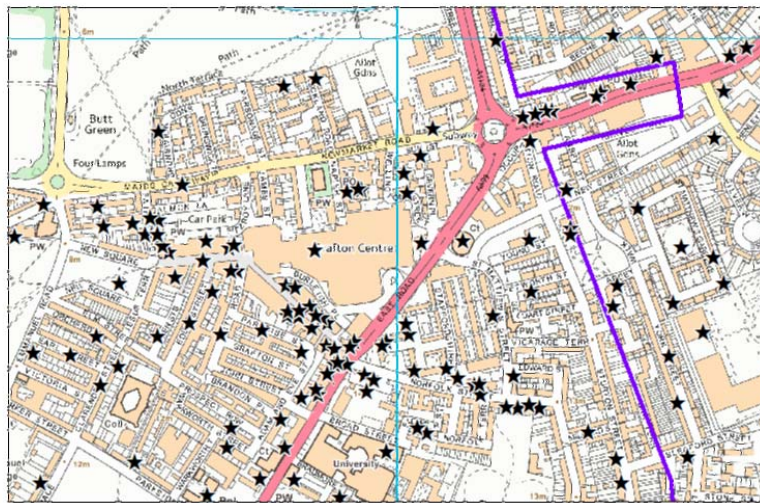


Figure 8: Average number of Incidents of street drinking in Hounslow on each day of a week, from October 2004 – October 2005.



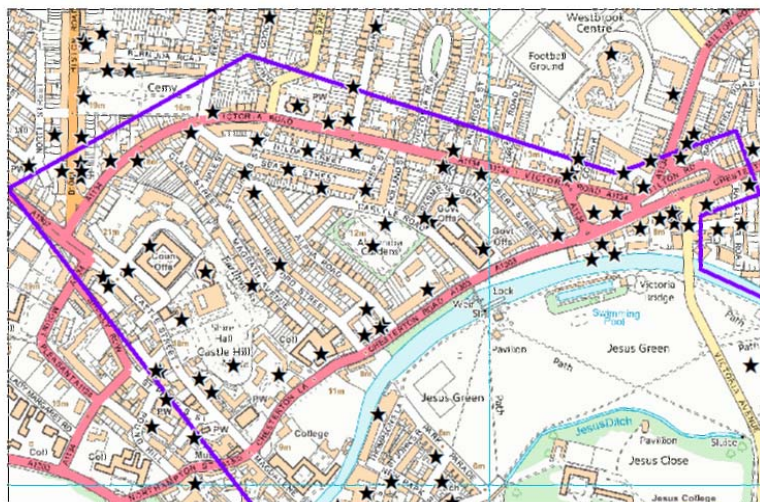
Appendix 3: Additional Maps: Keyword ASB incidents 2011/12 & 2012/13

Grafton Centre



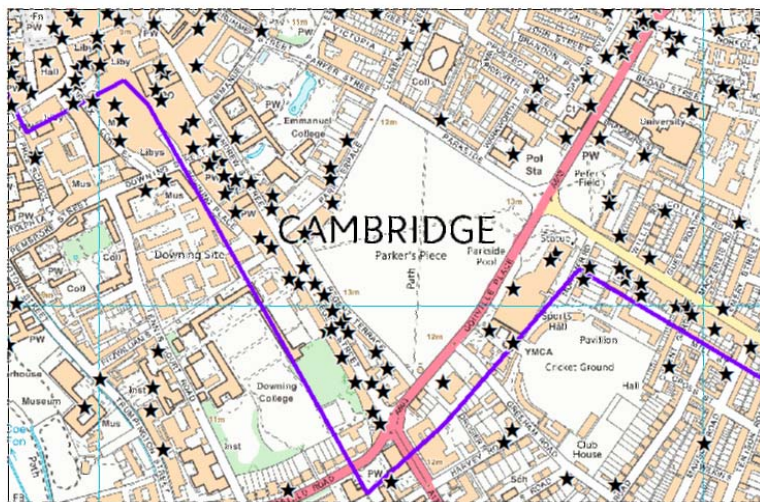
© Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 100023205

Mitcham's Corner



© Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 100023205

Regents street



© Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 100023205

The Research and Performance
Team
Cambridgeshire County Council
RES 1201
Shire Hall
Castle Hill
Cambridge
CB3 0AP

Tel: 01223 715300
Email: [research.performance@
cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:research.performance@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

About the Cambridgeshire County Council Research and Performance Team

The Research and Performance Team is the central research and information section of Cambridgeshire County Council. We use a variety of information about the people and economy of Cambridgeshire to help plan services for the county. The Research and Performance Team also supports a range of other partner agencies and partnerships.

Subjects covered by the Research and Performance Team include:

- Consultations and Surveys
- Crime and Community Safety
- Current Staff Consultations
- Data Visualisation
- Economy and The Labour Market
- Health
- Housing
- Mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Population
- Pupil Forecasting

For more details please see our website:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/research