

From Inspector Mike EBBINS, Broxtowe District Commander, Notts Police

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) has been a local crime priority for the Policing team in Beeston, Toton and Chilwell for over a year now and I wanted to take this opportunity to provide an update.

An ASB problem was first identified in Summer 2022 after a rise in reported issues on the tram and in town centre locations caused by young people. At this time my team focussed our work with partners to design this issue out of these locations, this worked but only resulted in dispersing the problem into other areas.

After consultation with the community I launched OP POTASSIUM in the autumn of 2022. This was an overtime operation, paying for two officers, four hours an evening to focus entirely on our ASB hotspot locations and dispersal powers were utilised to reinforce the action. This operation continued into January 2023.

Whilst this operation succeeded in driving reports of ASB down, it also highlighted gaps in provisions for these young people. In short, regular contact with these young people had identified they were banned from existing youth provisions due to poor behaviour but as a result, were bored and had nowhere else to go other than our street corners. It was clear we were not going to Police our way out of this problem and we needed support from partners.

Broxtowe Borough Council sought funding for a diversionary scheme and in February 2023, Transform Training introduced a dedicated support programme for our first cohort of young people called POTASSIUM PLUS. This project provided activity, education and emotional support to a select group of young people. The Police enforcement budget was extended to ensure a continued visible support for the community and both our agencies worked closely together to share information and progress.

We are now a number of months down the line since the launch of OP POTASSIUM and there has been real progress with both the behaviour of our cohort and reported incidents of ASB in the area. Currently reported ASB in our area is 45% down on the previous year and most importantly of all, feedback from those residents who attended the original consultation has been positive with a noticeable improvement.

That said, it is important for me to recognise ASB has not stopped and those experiencing issues will not be comforted by me quoting statistics therefore I want to make a couple of appeals to you direct today;

Firstly, I want to encourage those experiencing issues to report them. It is vital we understand the extent of the issue in our area so I can resource appropriately and I hope the above news has provided you with some reassurance that we will take the matter seriously and take appropriate action. If it is crime in action then please call 101. If it is lower level behaviour then contact the Council ASB line and they will share reports with myself.

Secondly, the behaviour of our young people has not been acceptable in recent months and we all have a collective responsibility to address this. Therefore I need parents to take a moment to talk to their children about what acceptable behaviour looks like and the impact poor behaviour can have on our community. Then ensure you are asking those extra questions when your children are going out, where are they going and what are they doing?

Please be assured, my officers are actively engaged with your school and we are all meeting regularly to discuss behaviour, share concerns and work through solutions. A roll out of class inputs is also scheduled over the next few months.