



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Antisocial Behaviour Programme Update Report
Date:	12 June 2014
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Pete Murray, Antisocial Behaviour Programme Coordinator

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide an overview of antisocial behaviour (ASB) incidents across parks and leisure facilities and electoral areas; and• Update committee on the activities, interventions and future developments of the ASB programme. <p>Members are reminded that the objectives of the ASB programme are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• enhance the environment around Parks and Leisure facilities;• develop education initiatives involving creative or supportive interventions to model acceptable behaviour around Parks and Leisure facilities;• define enforcement as a deterrent against infraction of bye-laws or legislation; and• develop sustainable interagency and inter-departmental networks and leading a partnership approach to reducing antisocial behaviour.

2.	Key Issues
	<p>Trends in the available ASB incident data</p> <p>The ASB Coordinator prioritises action and expenditure by collating evidence gathered through ASB incident reports.</p> <p>Below in Table 1, illustrates the comparative data of the number of incident reports of ASB in parks between December 2012 to April 2013 and December 2013 to April 2014. It shows an increase in the four electoral areas of Laganbank, Pottinger, Upper Falls and Victoria. This trend can be attributed to the ASB occurring during the darker winter nights. This</p>

involves reports of trespass when drinkers enter parks creating damage by lighting fires.

The data specifically highlights an increase in the following types of ASB:

- Criminal Damage; increased reports of fire setting etc,
- Drinking,
- Trespass, and
- Vehicle nuisance.

It also shows a downward trend in parks within Balmoral, Castle, Court, Lower Falls and Oldpark electoral areas.

Table 1: Comparison of the number of ASB incidents in Parks and Leisure Facilities across electoral areas between December 2012 to April 2013 and December 2013 to April 2014

December 2012 to April 2013		December 2013 to April 2014	
Electoral Area	Total ASB	Electoral Area	Total ASB
Balmoral	23	Balmoral	19
Castle	34	Castle	18
Court	35	Court	7
Laganbank	16	Laganbank	77
Lower Falls	14	Lower Falls	8
Oldpark	85	Oldpark	32
Pottinger	40	Pottinger	104
Upper Falls	28	Upper Falls	142
Victoria	6	Victoria	34
Total	281	Total	441

ASB in park and leisure facilities

The data presented in Appendix 1 illustrates a snapshot of ASB in parks between December 2013 to April 2014. The data details the three parks with the most incidents of ASB in each electoral area, the hotspot categories of ASB and where there were more than 20 incidents (these locations appear in bold type).

Planned Interventions

Planned intensive interventions are designed and introduced for parks that have more than 20 ASB incidents (see Table 2). The planned interventions span across all 4 objectives of the ASB programme: education, enforcement, environment and partnership. Interventions will resource and schedule enforcement operations in partnership with existing council services or PSNI and interventions also involve the environmental and physical development of a site.

Table 2 outlines the parks that have had more than 20 incidents during December 2013 and April 2014 and the specific interventions planned for the coming months.

Table 2: Specific interventions planned to tackle ASB in Parks with more than 20 ASB incidents

Laganbank	
Botanic	A series of family fun days have been planned to draw in more legitimate users. A programme of enforcement operations is ongoing during the spring and summer to address reports of rowdy behaviour and drinking.
Pottinger	
Ormeau	Park Wardens will issue fixed penalty notices for dog control and dog fouling offences. They will work with Community Safety officers and PSNI to tackle scramblers and drinking. Individuals reported for drinking will face prosecution and if they are under 18 they will be reported to the Community safety ASB forum.
Orangefield Playing Fields	The Park manager will ensure damage is repaired and Park Wardens will work with Community Safety officers and PSNI to tackle inappropriate vehicle use and drinking. Individuals reported for drinking will face prosecution and if they are under 18 they will be reported to the Community safety ASB forum.
Upper Falls	
Falls Park	The Park manager will ensure damage is repaired and Park Wardens will work with Community Safety officers and PSNI to tackle drinking. Individuals reported for drinking will face prosecution and if under 18 will be reported to the Community safety ASB forum.
City Cemetery	A decorative arts project has been initiated to address graffiti in the cemetery. Park Wardens will work with Community Safety officers and PSNI to tackle drinking. Individuals reported for drinking will face prosecution and if under 18 will be reported to the Community safety ASB forum.

Citywide ASB programme development

Alongside the intensive and citywide interventions planned to tackle reported incidents of ASB, a number of citywide ASB programme developments will be implemented during the coming months:

- Development of family friendly activity programmes. These programmes are designed to draw in legitimate park users and displace rowdy groups.
- Support to the Bonfire management programme to reduce fly tipping and accumulation of hazardous materials in parks.
- Park Wardens are currently deployed in parks as part of an ongoing enforcement programme. They will issue fixed penalties in relation to litter and dog fouling offences.
- Park Wardens will also work in close partnership with PSNI and Community safety officers during planned operations to tackle alcohol consumption in parks.
- Park Warden operations planning will support the ongoing Community safety joint operations with PSNI. It is intended that the opportunities for joint working in Park areas will also be shared with the DPCSP.

	<p>Strategic alignment with Health and Environmental Services</p> <p>At Committee's request, both Health and Environmental Services and the Parks and Leisure Department have successfully adopted a joint approach in planning and implementing high visibility and discrete operations. There have also been a number of operational meetings for BCC staff to ensure better co-ordination of resources. Park Wardens operations are regularly requested to tackle issues of litter, dog fouling and drinking; and it will be necessary to coordinate with a number of PSNI neighbourhood teams and the DPCSP.</p> <p>Health and Environmental Services Committee has requested a strategic review of ASB interventions. The expansion of the Council boundaries during Local Government Reform will require greater coordination of Council and Police services to provide the high quality partnership work required to reduce antisocial behaviour in a variety of "new" Belfast neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Parks and leisure officers will participate fully in the review in order to further improve Council practices to tackle ASB. It is anticipated that the review will report to Health and Environmental Services Committee in late 2014 and the Parks and Leisure Committee will be kept fully informed of the implications arising for its services and assets.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	The development of the programme will be facilitated through the agreed ASB budget 2014-2015 which is approximately £250,000.

4.	Equality Implications
	Much of the ASB programme work spans activities related to reducing interface tensions and bringing young people together to take part in positive programmes and activities. All of the programme work is delivered in line with the council's equality and good relations policies and procedures.

5.	Recommendations
	Members are asked to note the contents of this update report.

6.	Decision Tracking
	Updates on the Safer Neighbourhoods antisocial behaviour programme will be brought by the ASB Coordinator to the Committee three times a year in February, June and October.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	ASB: Antisocial behaviour BCC: Belfast City Council

	PCSP: Policing and Community Safety Partnership DPCSP: District Policing and Community Safety Partnership PSNI: Police Service for Northern Ireland
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8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: ASB in Parks in Electoral Areas, Dec 2013 to April 2014