



anti-social BEHAVIOUR

Issues,
Concerns
and
Experiences
of
Young
People
in the
Greater
Shantallow
Area

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Introduction



This paper marks the second piece of research we have undertaken in the last 18 months. The first, published in December of last year explored “values, attitudes and opinions” among 417 young people at St Brigid’s College. At least 80% of respondents were drawn from the Greater Shantallow Area and offered us a valuable insight into young people’s thoughts on a range of issues, partly so as to inform our own practice in the future.

Questions for consideration addressed a number of issues including that of Community Safety. This is an issue that affects the entire Community but one which is chiefly associated with the behaviour of young people. However, many young people feel unsafe in their own area and/or have been a victim of any number of incidents including the use of violence.

In attempting to understand better the causes of certain types of behaviour, we decided to embark on a second piece of research, the focus of which was to ask young people a number of questions directly related to anti-social behaviour. We had also been concerned for a considerable period of time about not only the negative press written about young people in relation to anti-social behaviour but also the lack of opportunities for young people to respond. Basically lots is written about young people but rarely if ever in partnership with young people.

In order to get a handle on the issue we identified a range of activities (26 in total) that were viewed as the most common forms of anti-social behaviour. We developed a questionnaire that would uncover among other things - if young people shared this consensus with adults, how it should be dealt with, who was likely to be involved and behaviour that is acceptable/unacceptable.

At the same time we wanted to carry out our research into the introduction of ASBO’s (Anti-Social Behaviour Orders) which at this time was causing much of a stir in the media due to their impending introduction to Northern Ireland. Along with many other groups we were concerned about much of the detail of proposed order and the process involved in its introduction.

One of major criticisms was the length of consultation time allowed. There seem to be more of a desire to push the legislation through parliament before the summer recess than to ensure an effective legislation. We were concerned that very few young people would be able to access the process or have enough time to potentially contribute. With this in mind our desire to examine how young people viewed anti-social behaviour with some reference to ASBO’s was paramount. When developing the questionnaire we felt it appropriate to examine both issues and included questions on both anti-social behaviour and ASBO’s.

The questionnaire contained in the Appendix is the result. Once again we approached ICR (Institute for Conflict Research) for the assistance and after an exchange of emails and telephone calls over a number weeks we agreed on a final version, which was circulated by Off the Streets staff, including Year 9, 10 and 11 pupils in St Brigid’s College. Once the questionnaires were collated (all 246 of them), ICR kindly took on the responsibility of the “knuckle crunching” and within a short period made available the results for our examination. The format of this report is slightly different to that of our last piece of research in that we have provided a summary of our findings at the beginning.

This report marks the second in a series of pieces of research, the third to be completed later this year. In the first instance we examined values whilst here we have looked at how young people view certain behaviours and the next piece will focus on the causes.

In completing the process we are keen to ensure that young people's voice is clearly heard and expressed. When ASBO's were being introduced it was clearly with young people in mind. The one target group that had no real opportunity to respond or who are seldom if ever asked about anti-social behaviour are young people themselves.

In as much as the process helps to inform how we work as well highlight how we might address the broad issue of anti-social behaviour, our intention is to also provide an outlet for young people to express their thoughts on a number of issues. This should provide "food for thought" for the 'Adult World!' It should also reflect what it means to be a teenager growing up in the Greater Shantallow Area.

At the end of my introduction in our last piece of research I extended an invitation to agencies working with young people in the Greater Shantallow Area to "embrace our findings". Again I would extend the same invitation as we once again work towards responding positively and imaginatively to the broader issue of anti-social behaviour.

Once again this research would not have been possible without the co-operation of St Brigid's College and in particular (as was and is the case on so many occasions) Vice Principal, Liam Gallagher.

I would like to thank the teachers who allowed us to "invade their" classrooms for 40 minutes! I would also like to thank Off the Streets staff, (in particular Youth Outreach Worker, Alison Mc Daid who took on the responsibility of co-ordinating events on the ground) without whose help we would not have managed to get around as many young people as we did.

Last but not least I would like to thank Michael Robertson (once again) for his truly imaginative design and Ulf Hanson at ICR for co-ordinating the 'boring' but essential bit that allows us to makes sense of the findings.

Fergal Barr
January 2006

Summary of Findings



This section is a summary of findings of a survey of 246 pupils at St. Brigid's College in June 2005. The survey was designed to uncover their views on a small number of matters related to anti-social behaviour including activities that constitute crime and/or anti-social behaviour or not as the case may be and in their opinion appropriate punishment. The survey also wanted to uncover some views on the introduction of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders or as they have become more commonly known ASBO's.

Almost all of respondents were aged 13-15 and the vast majority (at least 80%) identified themselves as living in the Greater Shantallow Area.

Fines proved to be the most popular punishment and young people recognised that there is still a clear role for parents in helping to resolve a variety of matters particularly in relation to certain behaviours where dialogue may be more effective. There is however is very little support for the notion of meeting victims.

Respondents generally look upon issues of noise at home or in the street, playing football in the street, engaging in graffiti and drinking in the streets as low-level disturbance that is not and should not be looked upon as a criminal offence and is questionable as to whether it should even be classified as anti-social. However in the event that someone was caught stealing a car the majority favoured a prison sentence. Community Service did not top any of the list for responses but consistently figured well as an option with percentages ranging between 13 and 24%.

There seems to be a link between damage to property and that of employing fines as a response. Fines were more common where attacks on emergency or ordinary vehicles took place or where there was damage to property, i.e., domestic, school or environment (such as cutting down/burning trees or graffiti on a person's home). It seems where damage affects individuals directly it is more likely to be viewed as a crime, for example, only 1 in 5 respondents viewed cutting down/burning trees or lighting fires in the street as a crime. As many young people viewed setting fire to an abandoned car as a crime as those whom viewed it as anti-social behaviour (44%).

Significant percentage differences show that whilst the 10-12 age group are more likely to be involved in stone throwing incidents the 13-15 year old age group are as equally likely to be involved in graffiti as 16-18 year olds being involved in Drink & Drugs.

In general, around half of all respondents viewed Stoning, the use of Drink & Drugs and causing Damage more as anti-social behaviour than as a crime. However, and somewhat surprising, almost 7 out of 10 young people view stealing as a crime.

Questions to a large extent concentrated on asking young people to classify certain behaviours as crime, anti-social behaviour or not at all. However, when asked to classify behaviours as acceptable or unacceptable this proved interesting. For example, figures for the same behaviours seen as 'Never OK' ranged from just over 63% for Graffiti and using Drink and Drugs to causing Damage (71.1%), Stoning (77%) and Stealing (79.5%). Six out of 10 said it 'never ok' to stone a police vehicle, 1 in 4 said it was 'sometimes ok' but only 1 in 10 said it was 'always ok.'

Seven out of 10 young people said graffiti at school or on someone's house is 'Never OK' although this dropped to half of young people surveyed when graffiti on pavement was considered. Damage to property was viewed as 'never ok' by almost 8 in 10 young people although this dropped to just under 6 in 10 when lighting fires or cutting down/burning trees was considered. In particular only 1 in 20 thought damage to individuals property was always ok. Taking a combined figure, just over two-thirds of young people nominated that 'noise' or 'playing football' was either 'Sometimes' or 'Always OK'. Surprisingly, only 1 in 20 thought that using 'Drink & Drugs' in the street was always ok although when combined with 'Sometimes OK' this figure rises to 1 in 4. Stealing is most frowned upon among young people Young people with just over 6% viewing it as Always' or 'Sometimes OK'.

A number of questions focused on the introduction of ASBO's. One third of respondents had never heard of ASBO's whilst forty-four percent felt that only in certain circumstances should the same laws used in England apply here. Interestingly enough though, only a slightly less 41% felt that the same laws should apply all or most of the time.

With regard to the issue of what constitutes an 'Expert Witness' respondents were unanimous. Overall, 92% felt that a witness has to see the event, taking place if their evidence is to be considered. Only 1 in 20 considered the notion of accepting evidence from someone who hadn't witnessed the event. Likewise, respondents felt that evidence considered for a conviction should go beyond reasonable doubt. Only 8% are willing to accept the balance of probabilities.

For consideration.....



There are a number of key points emanating from this research not least of the difference between how young people and adults view anti-social behaviour and crime. An examination of how this is defined with input from young people on the subject would it seem prove to be valuable not least for the purpose of giving young people a sense of ownership and input into the debate.

A consultation exercise leading to the development of perhaps a charter where young people in partnership with adults agree on punishment for certain types of behaviour has some merit. This would certainly allow for the introduction of a system of fines that young people seem to favour alongside the use of Community Service.

Also, an examination of why young people view neither football or noise as an issue might prove revealing. In order to address the issue of playing football there is certainly a need to provide more facilities. The development of a programme geared towards raising awareness of consequence of behaviour may have a positive impact on low-level nuisance behaviour. Using this as a model we may begin to ultimately address other issues such as Drink and Drugs, Stealing and Damage.

Young people have no real interest in meeting anyone who has been affected by their actions. There is a need to address this by perhaps developing programmes and projects that increase notions of responsibility and accountability.

As young people favour input from parents in certain situations then there is a need to ensure that parents also subscribe to the belief that they have responsibilities where their children's behaviour is concerned. Parents would also need to have skills where if they have to intervene in particular situations or respond to complaints or accusations about their children's behaviour.

There is also a need to address parent's attitudes to certain behaviours. For example, what is parents' approach or attitude to their children drinking? Research into this might help inform our practice.

Another interesting was how young people viewed the impact of their actions. It seems were damage affects individuals directly it is more likely to be viewed as a crime, for example, only 1 in 5 respondents viewed cutting down/burning trees or lighting fires in the street as a crime. As many young people viewed setting fire to an abandoned car as a crime as those whom viewed it as anti-social behaviour (44%). It seems the greater the impact on an individual more likely it is to be viewed as a crime. If this is the case, and only more research will clarify this, perhaps we should be examining what has changed, i.e., why do young people not view issues such as noise, football, graffiti and the use of drink as unacceptable or in the same way as adults?

These figures as with the others seem to indicate a clear difference in terms of values held by young people and their perceptions of the importance of these activities as compared with that of adults. For instance two-thirds of respondents are clear that stealing is a crime. This suggests strong values among young people. It seems that young people are clearly distinguishing what they view as important and in a sense re-classifying what would traditionally be seen as unacceptable behaviour. This does not suggest young people are less principled, for example where damage to someone else's property is concerned, over half of all respondents viewed it as a crime.

What is apparent among respondents is that the vast majority clearly distinguishes between what they view as “right and wrong”. As we have seen already, the more serious behaviours such as damage, stoning and stealing figure highly as “Never OK”. Again this seemed to be conditional to impact it has. For example, the greater the impact on an individual the more likely it is to be seen as unacceptable. Equally, if there is a question of ownership, i.e., waste ground not being used, or in this case cutting down trees which “don’t belong” to anyone then young people are less likely to view it as unacceptable.

Ultimately the more familiar a young person is with an individual and understand the relationship they have to their property the more likely they are to consider it as unacceptable behaviour. For example only 1 in 20 saw damage and the use of drink and drugs as always ok.

In terms of questions specifically on ASBO’s, findings are very clear. Young people are clear on what they view as an ‘Expert Witness’ and also the basis for securing a conviction, i.e., 8% were willing to accept conviction of the balance of probabilities.. They were however, more agreeable to laws used in England being adopted here. However, one-third of young people didn’t know what an ASBO is and suggests that not enough consultation took place on their proposed introduction. This is probably reflective of general approach to young people in terms of consulting with them on how to respond to anti-social behaviour.

Findings



Information Below are the various tables taking in all the frequencies. Just note that missing responses have occasionally been excluded from the analyses and tables so base numbers may not always be consistent to 100.

It's also important to note that whilst there are 26 different activities listed, in many cases we categorised results into sections, i.e., stoning, graffiti, damage, noise, football, drinking and drugs and stealing.

We have often taken any one of these sections and combined all figures so as to create an average percentage. The purpose of this was to help contextualise findings and to enable us to 'draw a picture' with regard to young people's views on the subject.

1. Demographics Table 1: Age and Gender of respondents

Age	Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%
11-13	0	0	1	0
14-16	133	98	92	95
17+	2	1	4	2
Missing	7	1	7	1
Total	142	100	104	100

Table 2: Area of Residence

Area of Residence	Number	%
Galliagh	107	44
Shantallow	51	21
Other	46	18
Carnhill	18	7
Culmore	9	4
Pennyburn	7	3
Missing	8	3
Total	246	100

Findings Following our initial research into the 'Values, Attitudes and Opinion' of young people in the Greater Shantallow Area published in December 2004, it was essential that in our follow-up research we were able to



target the right age group, those (in the 14-16 age group) who were viewed as most likely involved in or victim of anti-social behaviour. We have achieved this with a 95% return of respondents.

It was also vital that the overwhelming majority of respondents were living in the Greater Shantallow Area to ensure that views expressed reflected the broad opinion of young people. At least eight out of ten respondents identified themselves as being from the Greater Shantallow Area and combined with our target age group offers in our opinion a comprehensive view of young people's views on anti-social behaviour.

2. Table 3: Anti-social behaviour and Punishment

Activity	Fine %	Prison %	Community Service %	Tell Parents %	Meet Victim %	Nothing %
Stoning a Police vehicle	23	4	17	27	8	22
Stoning an ambulance	37	24	20	9	9	0
Stoning a fire-truck	37	18	19		9	1
Stoning cars/buses	33	5	18	15	12	4
Stoning someone's house	22	7	16	29	15	3
Graffiti on people's house	33	1	24	36	8	5
Graffiti on school	29	1	18	28	6	13
Graffiti on pavement	20	1	15	33	6	38
Smashing someone's windows	44	7	17	19	8	2
Smashing school windows	45	5	16	21	5	7
Destroying someone's property	43	13	16	22	8	2
Destroying someone's car	45	24	14	17	6	1
Cutting down/burning trees	33	3	22	8	4	12
Lighting fires in street	22	5	23	18	5	16
Setting fire to an abandoned car	29	16	19	27	6	11
Being noisy on the street at night	8	1	10	17	5	50
Being noisy in your house	10	1	5	24	7	65
Playing football in the street	12	1	1	11	1	81
Drinking in the street	23	3	7	3	6	22
Taking drugs in the street	17	27	14	37	5	9

Table 3: Continued	Fine %	Prison %	Community Service %	Tell Parents %	Meet Victim %	Nothing %
Stealing from local shop	26	19	19	28	5	1
Stealing from neighbour	18	25	13	34	8	2
Stealing cars	15	61	15	2	6	1
Being in a car that's stolen ¹⁸	26	23	15	18	7	11
Stealing from friends/family	14	15	15	40	11	5
Stealing from a large store	37	27	11	18	7	2

Findings The first question examined appropriate punishments for various forms of anti-social behaviour. Whilst each act is scored individually, combined results suggested that the most popular punishment was a fine (26.96%) followed by involvement of parents (21.88%), community service (15.34%), nothing (14.8%), prison (12.96%) and meeting with victims (4.47%). The highest response rate for meeting your victim was if you steal in general (18.33%) from if it is family and friends. However, there is very little support for this notion of 'restorative justice' which suggests this method is very much pushed by the Adult World

Interestingly 22% said that nothing should be done if you stone a police vehicle whilst this dropped dramatically to 5% if it involved stoning an emergency vehicle. Many respondents clearly felt that nothing should be done if you're noisy or playing football in the street with figures ranging between 50 and 81% with a combined percentage of 65%. In 4 of the scenarios where fine or parental involvement was deemed necessary young people also felt nothing should be done, including noise in the street or at home and football.

In the cases of Drugs & Drinking in the Street; stealing from a local shop, neighbour, friends or family; stoning a police vehicle or someone's house or daubing graffiti on school property, the response favours parental involvement where it is probably felt that parents can help mediate or positively exert influence.

Fines were more common where attacks on emergency or ordinary vehicles took place or where there was damage to property - domestic, school or environment (such as cutting down/burning trees or graffiti on a person's home). Only in 1 case (being noisy in the street) did the option of fine rise above 10% or 12% in the case of 2 others, i.e., being noisy at home or playing football in the street.

Sixty-one percent believed that prison was an effective punishment for stealing a car although this incidentally dropped to 23 % in the event of being a passenger car. Obviously respondents seen a clear difference in being in a car that has been stolen and that of the act of actually stealing a car.

From the 26 scenarios only in 3 occasions did the figure rise above 10% when meeting a victim was the option, i.e., stoning someone's house or car/bus and stealing from friends/family. Figures for meeting victims in the other cases ranged between 4% and 9% whilst the figure for that of playing football in the street dropped to 1%.



Community Service did not top any of the list although it consistently figured well with it only dropping 3 times below 10% and that was with reference to noise at home, playing football in the street and interestingly enough and perhaps a little surprisingly, drinking in the street. Being noisy in the street scored 10% whilst stealing from a large store only fared slightly more at 11% whilst on every other occasion, the option of community service ranged between 13 - 24%.

Taking drink or using drugs (combined) on the street, a combined 15.5% said nothing should be done (22% in the case of alcohol). However, 20% said a fine was applicable whilst 15% thought prison was an option. Just under 11% favoured community service whilst 32.5% said parents should be informed. Percentages for stealing varied from 14 to 37% in terms of applying a fine. Average percentages for each heading were 22.66% (stealing), 28.3% (prison), 14.6% (community service), 23.3% (involvement of parents) 7.35% (meeting victims) and 3.66% (nothing).

Comment Why are fines the most popular form of punishment? Why is there such reluctance to meet victims? Involvement of parents is also very popular (2nd choice). What is the reason for this? Do young people believe they can win over parents more? Is the choice of parents over meeting victims based on the belief that you'll get away with more or is there a belief that parents should have a veto on appropriate behaviour? Is a fine a cop out for young people - they face neither parents nor victims and can take the easy option? Why do 15% suggest nothing?

Clearly young people view the police in a negative light as compared with the rest of the emergency services. Do young people view police as part of emergency services and/or is it reflective of a general malaise towards policing among the Nationalist community. Interestingly enough more young people elected for a fine (25%? 23%) for stoning the police and 27% for the involvement of parents.

Respondents clearly view noise and football as "very low level" disturbance. Within individual and combined figures there is a suggestion that some young people are aware of the impact that this is having but the vast majority view this issue of very little importance. The lack of facilities no doubt contributes to issues re: football and perhaps a more proactive campaign to address this might be the way to resolve it.

An examination of why young people view neither football or noise as an issue might prove revealing. If we address this with a view to asking young people to consider their actions through a programme of activity geared towards raising awareness of consequence of behaviour and ultimately that of taking responsibility perhaps we can address other issues such as Drink and Drugs, Stealing and Damage.

There seems to be a link between damage to property and that of fines? Is this the case? Do young people view it as an easy way to deal with it or do they see it as "if you damage property you must pay for it". Whatever way they look upon it should a fine equate to the amount of damage done? E.g., if it costs £2000 to replace a car you've stolen should you be fined £2000?

it a fine (15%), community service (18%) or as some might be surprised to learn 61% advocating a prison sentence. Clearly there is a strong desire to address this issue - not even the involvement of parents is considered credible - only 20% favouring such an approach. Is this an indication of the lack of faith that young people have in parents to act in this regard? Are young people clearly losing patience in this issue or have they always felt this way?

I have already questioned if young people are unsympathetic to the idea of a restorative justice approach. Perhaps it's the specific aspect of meeting victims that is unfavourable as opposed to making some form of recompense as the option of using Community Service as the medium for doing this fairly well throughout the survey.

In the instances where scores are low i.e., football, noise and drink and stealing from a large store with the acceptance of stealing these responses reflect young people's views around what they see as unacceptable behaviour.

With regard to taking drink and drugs the most favoured option was one where parents are involved. It is significant that young people perhaps view the role of parents as more important than that of a punitive approach such as a fine. It could also be a reflection of the number of parents who allow their sons and daughters to drink and therefore respondents know accountability might be less. However, this is speculation and would need to be verified. What is parents' approach or attitude to their children drinking

When individual drinking and drugs figures are combined it results in 15% of respondents advocating prison. This figure is inflated when though reality is that the vast majority of this relates to the use of drugs only - 27% said that taking drugs in the street should carry a custodial sentence.

In conclusion, doing nothing is not an option in most cases whilst the notion or idea of meeting your victim seems an 'alien' concept to young people. A fine is the most commonly expressed punishment and clearly there is still a role for parents in dealing with situations where mediation or intervention by parents can be effective. There is also the option of community service which is favourable.

There is also significant difference in how certain types of behaviour are viewed. Playing football and drinking in the street or causing noise on the streets or in the home may be for many something that needs to be eradicated, but the overwhelmingly majority of young people don't share this opinion. In fact, in all but a few cases, respondents have virtually dismissed out of hand the notion that any of these behaviours are serious enough to warrant a strong response of any sort never mind a custodial sentence.

Section 2



2.1 Anti-social behaviour and the perceived age of the perpetrators

Table 4: Age responsible for the action

Activity	10-12 Years %	10-12 Years %	16-18 Years %
Stoning a police vehicle	12	63	19
Stoning an ambulance	23	53	15
Stoning a fire-truck	22	52	16
Stoning cars/buses	26	48	15
Stoning someone's house	24	49	16
Graffiti on people's house	15	54	22
Graffiti on school	12	62	17
Graffiti on pavement	25	51	12
Smashing someone's windows	20	52	19
Smashing school windows	15	56	18
Destroying someone's property	13	49	30
Destroying someone's car	13	38	39
Cutting down/burning trees	14	46	28
Lighting fires in street	18	52	18
Setting fire to an abandoned car	29	16	19
Being noisy in the street	15	48	24
Being noisy in your house	24	40	22
Playing football in the street	24	48	13
Drinking in the street	6	42	40
Taking drugs in the street	6	26	55
Stealing from local shop	26	52	11
Stealing from neighbour	17	49	22
Stealing cars	7	27	55
Being in a car that is stolen	6	39	43
Stealing from friends/family	16	52	20
Stealing from a large store	12	43	34

Findings This table presents a real mixture of opinion with regard to those responsible for certain types of behaviour. For example there is little difference in percentages involving all age groups in causing damage, noise and playing football. Where there is noticeable differences is stoning, graffiti, drink & drugs and stealing.

Significant percentage differences show that whilst the 10-12 age group are more likely to be involved in stoning offences equally the 13-15 year old age group are as likely to be involved in graffiti as 16-18 year olds being involved in Drink & Drugs. Whilst there is little differences across the 10-15 age group involved in stealing, figures rise to more than 1 in 4 in the 16-18 age group. Proportionally, 1 in 4 in all 3 age groups (within a 3% margin) are involved in damage implying a distinct lack of respect or concern for those who own property. Again there is just slightly less than 3% difference in margin with regard to noise but in the opinions of respondents less than 1 in 10 are responsible for noise levels. Even less so, at most only 1 in 20 is responsible for football.

Comment Taking as combined averages, young people across the Greater Shantallow Area are involved in Criminal Damage, Stealing & Stoning, followed by much lesser exploits such as Graffiti, Noise, Drink & Drugs, and football. From our own investigations, it seems that most young people are drinking or taking drugs on a regular or occasional basis. This might suggest that stealing & stoning is related to the consumption of alcohol and we need to separate the use of drink and drugs to get a more accurate picture of influences on young people's behaviour; there is a clear distinction between not only who's involved in various behaviours but the varying levels of what young people see as acceptable and unacceptable. In this case young people view graffiti, noise, drink & drugs as low levels of anti-social behaviour

2.1 Table 5: Are these activities listed below crime, anti-social behaviour or neither?

Activity	Crime %	Anti-social Behaviour %	Neither %
Stoning a Police vehicle	29	56	11
Stoning an ambulance	56	39	0
Stoning a Fire-truck	55	41	1
Stoning cars/buses	36	59	1
Stoning someone's house	29	63	2
Graffiti on people's house	17	73	6
Graffiti on school	14	73	6
Graffiti on pavement	14	73	8
Smashing someone's windows	8	63	23
Smashing school windows	48	46	2
Destroying someone's property	53	40	2
Destroying someone's car	65	29	2



Table 5 continued	Crime %	Anti-social Behaviour %	Neither %
Cutting down/burning trees	20	58	16
Lighting fires in street	18	63	13
Setting fire to abandoned car	44	44	5
Being noisy on the street at night	3	46	42
Being noisy in your house	2	24	62
Playing football in the street	1	11	76
Drinking in the street	13	62	17
Taking drugs in the street	50	39	5
Stealing from the local shop	68	25	4
Stealing from neighbour	69	25	3
Stealing cars	86	9	2
Being in a car that is stolen	42	41	11
Stealing from friends/family	57	32	5
Stealing from a large store	74	20	2

Findings Again, as with previous tables, there is a disparity in how young people view the activities listed. For example and in a similar vein to previous tables, very few young people regard Graffiti, Noise or Football as a crime with combined respective figures at 15%, 2.5% and 1%. Most view these activities as forms of Anti-Social behaviour with again combined respective figures at 73%, 35% and 11%. Seventy-six percent said that football was neither crime nor anti-social behaviour as did fifty-two per-cent regarding noise and just under 7% of respondents failed to acknowledge Graffiti as either crime or anti-social behaviour.

In general, around half of all respondents viewed Stoning (51.6%), the use of Drink & Drugs (50.5%) and causing Damage (49%) as anti-social behaviour whilst figures for the same deemed as a crime were a respective 41%, 31.5% and 36.5%. In a nutshell no more than 4 in every 10 young people view stoning, the use of drink and drugs and damage as criminal activities. In fact apart from stealing, six out of every 10 young people see none of the activities listed as a crime. Interestingly and somewhat surprising is that 66% of young people view stealing as a crime. This figure is significantly more than the nearest other figure, i.e., 41% for stoning.

A more in-depth figure is revealed when each activity is broken down and figures are not viewed alongside others. For example, over half of young people view stoning police as Anti-Social behaviour compared with just under a third who see it as a crime. Equally, as many young people viewed stoning an ambulance (56%) and fire appliances (55%) as a crime although this dropped to around one-third when stoning of cars, buses and someone's house was considered.

Figures for graffiti be it someone's house, school or a pavement were almost identical. Almost 3/4 of respondents view graffiti as a form of anti-social behaviour. In terms of causing damage, destroying property and someone's car was viewed by 53% and 65% as a crime. It seems where damage affects individuals directly it is more likely to be viewed as a crime, for example, only 1 in 5 respondents viewed cutting down/burning trees or lighting fires in the street as a crime. As many young people viewed setting fire to an abandoned car as a crime as those whom viewed it as anti-social behaviour (44%).

A recurring theme in our findings so far has been how young people perceive football, the use of drink and drugs and noise in terms of criminal or as anti-social behaviour. Young people view drinking more as anti-social behaviour (50.5%) Taking views on noise, football, drink & drugs combined just over 1 in 10 view any of these activities as criminal and almost half view all 3 behaviours as neither a crime or anti-social.

As already mentioned almost 7 in every 10 young people viewed stealing in general as criminal although individual figures vary in each regard. For example, respondents viewed stealing from a large store (74%) more negatively than that of a local store (68%). Almost 9 out of 10 respondents saw stealing a car as a crime whilst (and probably a little surprisingly) 6 in every 10 young people viewed stealing from friends and family as a crime. The lowest individual figure was that of being in a stolen car, i.e., 42%. Clearly young people distinguish between stealing a car and being in a stolen car.

Comment A pattern seems to be emerging, i.e., young people do not view football, noise and drinking as serious issues, and as shown in this table, they view graffiti in the same way. The use of drink and drugs is viewed largely as anti-social behaviour although just almost one third of respondents view the use of drugs as a crime.

These figures as with the others seem to indicate a clear difference in terms of values held by young people and their perceptions of the importance of these activities as compared with that of adults. For instance two-thirds of respondents are clear that stealing is a crime. This suggests strong values among young people.

Depending on the situation stealing might only impact one person whereas young boys playing football in the street may affect lots of residents due to potential damage it might cause. If young people refused to move or talk back to adults then they are normally viewed as disrespectful - however clearly from our results young people have values and principles, which apply in certain situations. Their priorities or more to the point where they choose to apply these principles is where their interests conflict with adults.

Young people are clearly distinguishing what they view as important and in a sense re-classifying what would traditionally be seen as unacceptable behaviour. This does not suggest young people are less principled, for example where damage to someone else's property is concerned, over half of all respondents viewed it as a crime. It seems the greater the impact on an individual more likely it is to be viewed as a crime. If this is the case, and only more research will clarify this, perhaps we should be examining what has changed, i.e., why do young people not view issues such as noise, football, graffiti and the use of drink as unacceptable or in the same way as adults?



2.2 Table 6: Which activities are acceptable/unacceptable?

Activity	Sometimes OK %	Always OK%	Never OK %
Stoning a police vehicle	24	7	57
Stoning an Ambulance	1	1	85
Stoning a fire-truck	1	1	85
Stoning cars/buses	5	1	81
Stoning someone's house	9	1	77
Graffiti on people's house	14	2	70
Graffiti on school	13	5	70
Graffiti on pavement	25	13	51
Smashing someone's windows	7	3	78
Smashing school-windows	6	4	77
Destroying someone's property	8	2	77
Destroying someone's car	6	2	77
Cutting down/burning trees	22	6	57
Lighting fires in street	20	7	58
Setting fire to abandoned car	9	4	74
Being noisy on the street at night	52	15	23
Being noisy in your house	40	15	23
Playing football in the street	27	56	7
Drinking in the street	31	7	49
Taking drugs in the street	7	3	78
Stealing from a local shop	6	1	79
Stealing from neighbour	2	2	82
Stealing cars	2	2	81
Being in a car that is stolen	10	3	73
Stealing from friends/family	4	1	81
Stealing from a large store	2	2	81

Findings Whilst the last section undertook to find out whether respondents considered certain activities criminal or anti-social, this section attempts to find out whether young people viewed the same as acceptable or unacceptable. The overall response rate for this question was 86.5%. Apart from noise (15%) and football (56%) only small percentages of respondents, (stealing 1.8% & Graffiti 6.6%) viewed all other behaviours as 'Always ok'. Figures for the same behaviours that respondents viewed as 'Never OK' ranged from just over 63% for Graffiti and using Drink and Drugs to causing Damage (71.1%), Stoning (77%) and Stealing (79.5%).

When figures are examined independently of one another, police vehicles aside, 8 out of 10 young people clearly thought stoning any vehicle was wrong. Six out of 10 said it 'never ok' to stone a police vehicle, 1 in 4 said it was 'sometimes ok' but only 1 in 10 said it was 'always ok.'

Seven out of 10 young people said graffiti at school or on someone's house was never ok although this dropped to half of young people surveyed when graffiti on pavement was considered. Damage to property was viewed as 'never ok' by almost 8 in 10 young people although this dropped to just under 6 in 10 when lighting fires or cutting down/burning trees when considered. In particular only 1 in 20 thought damage to individuals property was always ok. Taking a combined figure, just over two-thirds of young people nominated that 'noise' or 'playing football' was either 'sometimes' or 'always' ok. Surprisingly, only 1 in 20 thought that using 'Drink & Drugs' in the street was always ok although when combined with 'sometimes ok' this figure rises to 1 in 4. Stealing is most frowned upon among young people Young people with just over 6% viewing it as always or sometimes ok.

Comment The question of principles and values touched on in the last table are further developed above. Whilst tables 3-5 focus on classification of certain behaviours and relevant responses, this table focuses on the level of acceptability.

What is apparent among respondents is that the vast majority clearly distinguishes between what they view as "right and wrong". As we have seen already, the more serious behaviours such as damage, stoning and stealing figure highly as "Never OK". Again this seemed to be conditioned to impact caused or perception of ownership. For example, the greater the impact on an individual the more likely it is to be seen as unacceptable. Equally, if there is a question of ownership, i.e., waste ground not being used, or in this case cutting down trees which "don't belong" to anyone then young people are less likely to view it as unacceptable.

Ultimately the more familiar a young person is with an individual and understand the relationship they have to their property the more likely they are to consider acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The figures revealed in this table is somewhat reassuring - very few young people see any of the behaviours listed (apart from noise and football) as always ok. For example only 1 in 20 saw damage and the use of drink and drugs as always ok.

Section 3



In Section 3 we wanted to explore respondents knowledge of ASBO legislation. We asked four key questions that in our opinion would have a direct effect on young people and were based on criticisms originally levelled at the introduction of ASBO's in Northern Ireland. Criticisms included the length of the consultation period and the model of ASBO being introduced, i.e., based on that which was introduced in England therefore unlikely to take cognisance of the political situation here.

Another key feature of ASBO legislation was the use of 'Expert Witnesses' and what exactly was meant by it. Convictions could be secured on the word of an 'Expert Witness' who wouldn't necessarily have to witness an offence occurring but whose professional opinion could be considered in the event of a judgement being made. For many this shifted weighting for securing a conviction from 'beyond reasonable doubt' to 'balance of probabilities' and undermined due process. The nature of the legislation allowed for the potential imposition of an ASBO on the evidence of someone who might be able to provide eye-witness testimony. An individual who breaks the conditions of his or her ASBO could in effect find themselves convicted in court and end up with a Criminal Record even though they have no previous criminal convictions. For many, this was unacceptable and undermines the very basis upon which the legal system is built.

Having considered these criticisms we felt it was appropriate that young people are quizzed on the same issues. We tried to reflect these concerns in the questions that we asked providing a number of options that respondents could choose from in order to gauge as broad a response as possible.

In order to do this we examined whether young people not only heard of ASBO's but understood what it stood for, if the legislation applied in England should be used in Northern Ireland, what constitutes an Expert Witness and at what stage should you be convicted of breaking the law.

3. Table 7: Have you heard of the term ASBO and do you know what it means?

Definition of ASBO	Number	%
Anti-social Behavioural Order	156	64
Never heard of it	82	33
Anti-Social Bother Opposition	2	1
A Special Behaviour Order	2	1
A Sudden Behaviour Offer	1	0

Comment In Table 7 we enquired how many respondents had heard of an ASBO and if they knew what the term meant. Two-thirds chose the correctly. However, this figure is somewhat inflated as we know of some respondents disclosing the answer to their classmates at the time of our visit. The overall impact of this might only have made a difference of a couple of percentage points and therefore we can assume that somewhere in the region of at least 60% would have guessed correctly and this still represents a significant number of respondents. Significantly, one-third of young people didn't know what ASBO stood for and this clearly reflects the lack of consultation on a piece of legislation which to all intents and purpose was designed with young people in mind.

3.1 Table 8: Should the same laws regarding crime and anti-social behaviour used in England be used in Northern Ireland?

Same laws as England?	Number	%
Only in certain circumstances	106	44
All of the time	54	22
Most of the time	46	19
Never	36	15

Comment Forty-four percent felt that only in certain circumstances should the same laws apply here. Interestingly enough though, only a slightly less 41% felt that the same laws should apply all or most of the time. In any event, 1 in 5 respondents felt that laws should apply all the time. Significantly only 15% of respondents ruled out the same laws being applied suggesting that young people were open and flexible regarding arrangements for the implementation of ASBO's. If as we suggest in the last table that the consultation period was too short and can therefore knowledge of ASBO's among young people is limited then it begs the questions as to why so many are willing to consider the use of English law here. Does this mean there's an acceptance of or a fair degree of trust in English law or is it an indication that young people are more open and flexible than we give them credit for?

3.2 Table 9: In Anti-social behaviour legislation, who is defined as an "Expert Witness"?

Expert Witness?	Number	%
Saw what happened and knows everything about incident	188	76
Saw what happened and knows something	21	9
Saw what happened but doesn't know everything about the incident	18	7
Didn't see what happened but knows everything about it	13	5

Comment Respondents were pretty unanimous in their opinion of what constituted an 'Expert Witness.' Overall, 92% felt that a witness has to see the event, taking place if their evidence is to be considered. Only 1 in 20 considered the notion of accepting evidence from someone who hadn't witnessed the event. This clearly goes against the grain or essence of what was contained in the legislation and undermines a central plank of ASBO legislation. If we go on the results contained then a proper consultation might have been weighted against the introduction of the 'Expert Witness.'



3.3 Table 10: When should you be convicted of breaking the law?

Conviction when?	Number	%
The evidence is so clear that it can't be questioned	169	69
It is beyond any reasonable doubt	27	11
It is most likely it happened but some questions remain	25	10
It is probable that it happened but not definite	20	8

Comment As with Table 9, again the opinion expressed by respondents is quite conclusive. A minimum of 80% is clearly expressing that the minimum requirement that can be expected is that evidence is beyond reasonable doubt. Almost 70% are also saying that evidence is so conclusive it can't be questioned. Only 8% are willing accepting to accept the balance of probabilities.



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