



Lewes CDRP: ASB & Criminal Damage in Newhaven September 2006 to February 2007

Introduction

This report contains information on Crime & Disorder in Newhaven over the last 6 months between September 2006 and February 2007. Its purpose is to provide the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) and the Local Action Team (LAT) in particular with information needed to reduce these key crimes and disorder incidents.

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

Definition: The following is based on Sussex Police Incident data, which are made up of calls made to Sussex Police which have not been recorded as a crime. ASB incidents have been extracted based on Police definitions (Signal Insecurities) and include the following:

- **Social Disorder** which is made up of rowdy and/or nuisance behaviour such as general drunken behaviour, gatherings in public places, shouting and swearing, rowdy and noisy behaviour, litter, fly tipping, inappropriate use of fireworks and nuisance neighbours
- **Noise Nuisance** includes noise from businesses, pubs, clubs, alarms etc
- **Street Nuisance** such as street drinking, begging, prostitution, vehicle related nuisance (which includes parking related nuisance, mini motos, street cruising etc)
- **Physical Disorder** made up of calls reporting potential abandoned vehicles
- **Significant Events** which are made up of non crime incidents involving race, religion, disability, Sexual Orientation or age related.

It is important to note that incidents are based on details given by the caller, so may depend on their perception rather than what is actually occurring. For example a group of friends meeting and “having a laugh” could be just that but can be perceived as anti-social or intimidating by someone else. However it is important to consider these calls because they add to the overall pattern of Crime and Disorder, especially in relation to so called low level incidents that are not recorded as an offence but nevertheless impact on people’s lives and perceptions of their area.

Incident data does not contain specific fields for method, perpetrators etc. Therefore to try to be more specific in regards to the type of incidents that occur, key word searches have been carried out on the narrative details contained in the records¹.

Area Analysed: The town of Newhaven has been defined as consisting of the two wards of Newhaven Denton & Meeching and Newhaven Valley together with the South Highton area (that falls in Ouse Valley Ward)

¹ Incidents can of course contain more than one of the key words searched or the meaning can be different from interpreted.

Type of ASB in Newhaven: During the 6 month period there were 507 analysed ASB incidents in the town as defined above. The majority (77%) have been classified as Social Disorder largely involving rowdy and nuisance behaviour which includes shouting and swearing, loutish, rowdy and noisy behaviour, general drunkenness, climbing on buildings, including scaffolding, throwing stones or other missiles, letting down car tyres etc.

The most common type of report involves young people or youths, there were 267 such reports in the analysed period. It must be stressed that these incidents are based on the perception of the caller and no specific ages are generally recorded, so the term youth or young people can apply to ages from around 10 to 20 years old.

Other less common reports involved domestic issues² (47), neighbours (28), abandoned vehicles³ (28), vehicle related complaints mostly in regard to bad parking (23) and complaints about motorbikes, scramblers and mini motorbikes (45 in all, 27 specifying youths involved, 28 where no descriptions were included).

Context of ASB in Newhaven: The number of ASB incidents in Newhaven is relatively high compared to levels in Lewes District as a whole. In the 6 month analysed period, around 26% of all ASB incidents in The District took place in the analysed Newhaven area. The latest population estimates show that this area accounts for 14%⁴ of Lewes District residents, therefore the rate of incidents is higher in Newhaven. In fact the rate per 1,000 of the population is higher in Newhaven than in the other main towns of Lewes District.

A recent East Sussex Strategic Assessment carried out found Newhaven Denton Ward to have the 7th highest number and 13th highest rate of incidents in East Sussex.⁵

When? -Time & Day: Fridays and Saturdays were the clear peak days for incidents, in particular those relating to Social Disorder. These Social Disorder Incidents predominantly occurred at the weekend, with around 50% taking place from Friday to Sunday. Youth related incidents also show a clear weekend peak with Fridays then Saturdays the peak days.

Incidents were spread through the day, though there were peaks around 8pm and 4pm. The general period from 4pm to 10pm accounted for around 65% of all incidents, with Social Disorder even more common in these hours (69%).

Incidents at the weekend show a later peak around 10pm, with higher numbers between then and 1am. There are lesser numbers of incidents around 4pm at weekends but the 6-8pm period remains a secondary peak period. Weekday incidents are more concentrated between 4pm and 8pm.

Youth related incidents peak between 6pm and 8pm with a lesser secondary peak at 4pm. Incidents around 4pm are most likely to be associated with the end of the school day, as at the weekend youth related incidents around this time are considerably less.

² Can include sibling fights, problem sons or daughters etc as well as between partners and ex partners

³ Do not necessarily mean that cars are actually abandoned

⁴ Population Estimates 2006 – Parishes, CACI 2006

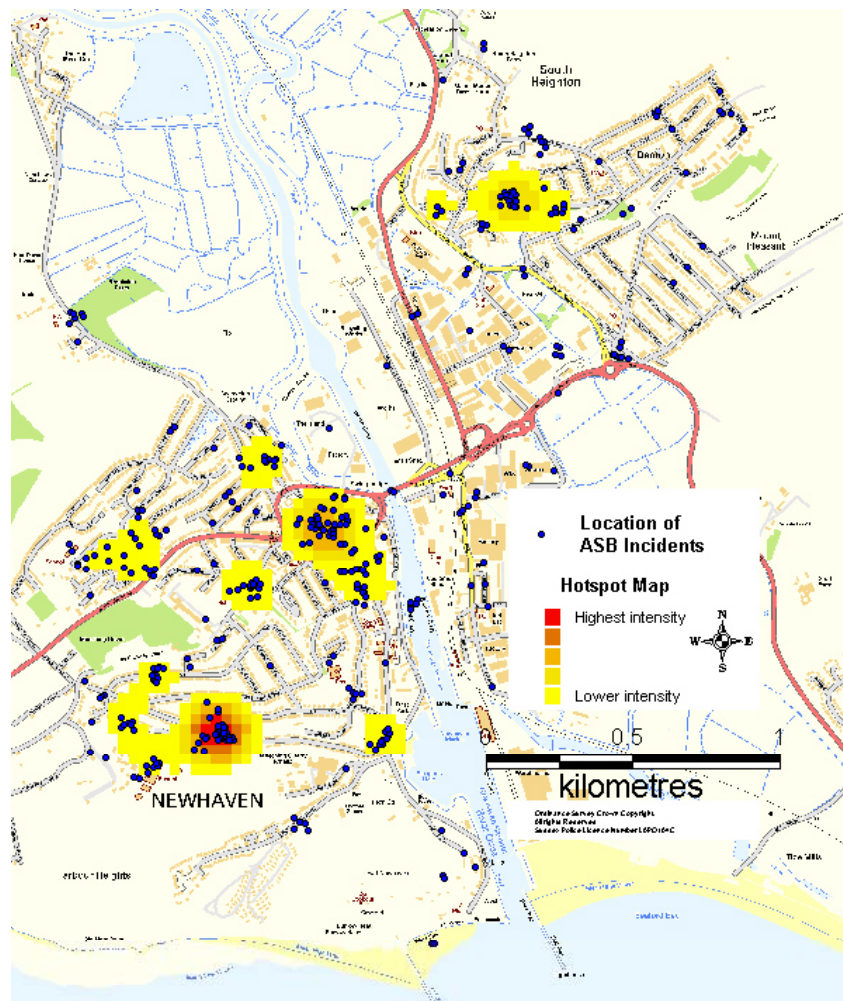
⁵ East Sussex Strategic Assessment (Feb 2007)

Indeed weekday youth related incidents peak at 4pm, with the peak at weekends becoming later between 7pm and 11pm.

The conclusion from this is that with ASB, weekends play a key role. The later peak periods at the weekends in general are caused by the increased role of alcohol and the night time economy, as well as young people staying out later and socialising.

Where? Location of Incidents: Incidents occur throughout the town; however there are pockets of concentration. The map below shows the location of incidents (the blue dots on the map) and the areas where incidents are most concentrated, those areas shaded red being what can be termed the hotspot relative to Newhaven.

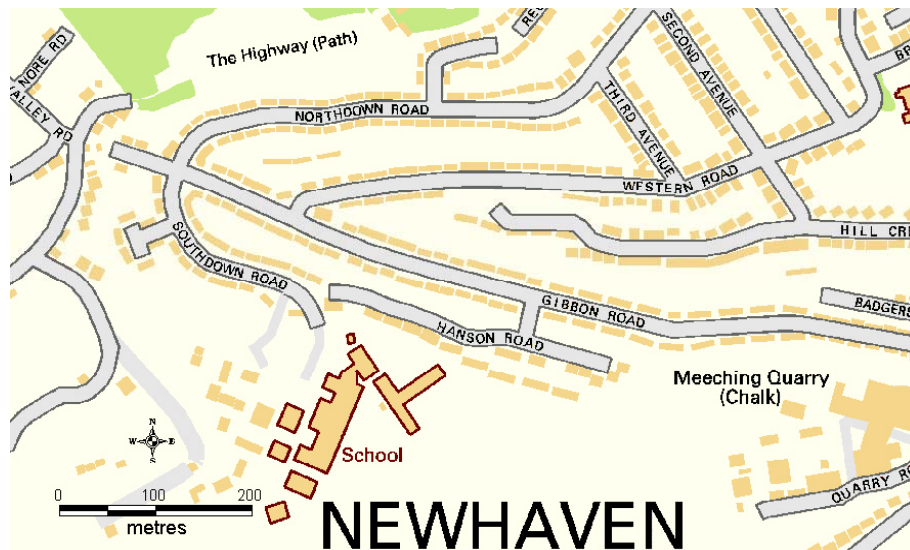
Map 1: Location of ASB Incidents



There are 3 main areas of incident concentration:

1. **Gibbon Road Area:** 121 incidents in the area shown below, which incorporates Gibbon Road itself, Southdown Road (including Tideway School), Hanson Road, Northdown Road and part of Hillcrest Road. Gibbon Road was the most common street for incidents, with 52 taking place at a location on this street, followed by Southdown Road (25), Hanson Road (18) and Northdown Road (14).

Map 2: Location of Main ASB Hotspot



Incidents were largely Social Disorder (78%), with 85 incidents involving youths in some form largely involving general rowdy behaviour, drinking or the use of motorbikes. Ages of those involved are mixed, from 10 to 20, though many callers describe large groups in the area, with 15-17 year olds seemingly most common.

Saturdays were the peak days, with 26% of incidents occurring on Saturdays through the analysed period. Fridays were the next most common days, followed by Mondays and Thursdays. Incidents peaked from 6pm to 8pm, with lesser peaks at 4pm and around Midnight/1am (in particular at weekends). Youth incidents showing a similar time/day pattern as ASB incidents as a whole in the area.

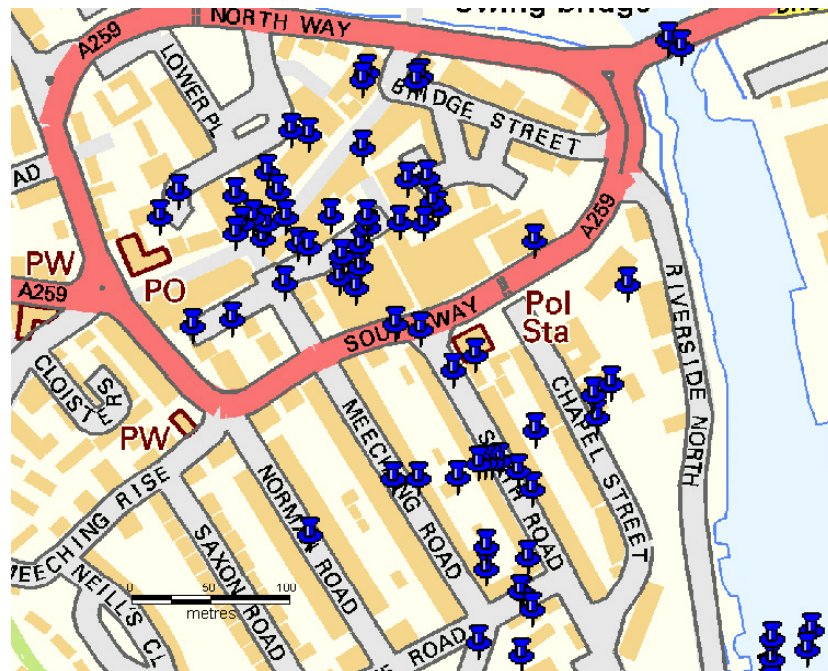
The most common location in this area was around Gibbons News Market. There were 14 incidents identified as occurring in or immediately outside the shop, most involving young people drinking and being rowdy in the vicinity. Most calls were complaints about this behaviour, though there was one complaint about staff selling cigarettes to children from Tideway School.

There were 18 complaints regarding mini motorbikes or other types of motorbikes (scooters, trail bikes). These incidents occurred throughout the week and the day (from 2pm to Midnight), with 8 in Northdown Rd, 5 in Gibbon Road and 5 in Southdown Road (including 3 on school grounds).

2. Town Centre Area: 86 incidents, largely Social Disorder (87%), with 49 incidents involving youths in some form largely general rowdy behaviour or drinking. The remainder included abandoned vehicles, general disturbances, drunken individuals and fights.

As would be expected in a town centre, incidents were concentrated at the weekends, with Fridays followed by Saturdays being the peak days. Incidents peaked from 4pm to 8pm and 10pm to Midnight (particularly at the weekend). Youth incidents show a similar time/day pattern as ASB incidents as a whole in the area, with a strong weekend peak and most commonly occurring between 6pm and 9pm at weekends and 4pm to 8pm during the week.

Map 3: Town Centre Area



Incidents were concentrated on The High Street (29) as well as the roads nearby (Newhaven Square and Dacre Road), largely involving rowdy youths or drunken individuals. Outside this area, coming away from the immediate Town centre, there were lesser numbers of incidents on South Rd (4 at the Kebab Shop), Meeching Road and Chapel Street though these were generally mixed in nature, including domestic related, nuisance motor bikes, neighbour complaints and abandoned vehicles alongside the rowdy behaviour and youth related incidents seen in the High Street area

The most common locations in this area were all very close to each other in the heart of the town centre:

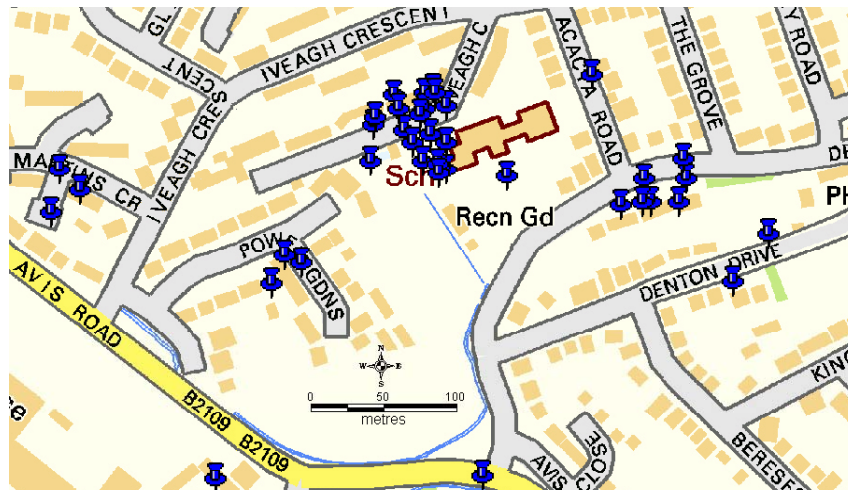
- Multi-Storey Car Park: 13 incidents split between weekdays and weekends, with 4pm to 7pm the most common times. 12 of the 13 incidents involved youths and involved drinking, throwing objects and loitering
- Roy's Liquor Store: 9 incidents around or outside this premises, all involving youths and taking place from Thursday to Saturday, though at varied times (Midday to 10pm). 6 of the 9 incidents involved groups drinking with a further incident where the caller was asked to buy alcohol by a group. It should be stressed that there is no indication that alcohol was bought at the Roy's.
- Sommerfield's: 6 incidents all involving youths. Incidents took place from Tuesday to Fridays and from 3pm to 7pm. 5 incidents involved youths causing a problem in the supermarket.

Ages of youths involved in the area are often not distinguished in reports. Of those where approximate ages are stated, it appears to be that 15-17 year olds are most likely to be involved.

3. **Denton/South Heighton Area:** 59 incidents in the area shown below, which incorporates Iveagh Crescent (28 incidents), St Martins Crescent (12), Denton Road (12) with low numbers of incidents on Powell Gdns, Denton Drive and

Acacia Rd. Incidents were largely Social Disorder (93%), with 42 incidents involving youths in some form largely general rowdy behaviour or drinking. The remainder included low numbers of domestic related incidents and complaints about neighbours

Map 4: Denton/South Heighton Area



Incidents were spread through the week in this area, with peak days on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Incidents were most frequent from 3pm to 9pm, with peaks at 6pm then 8/9pm.

The main area where incidents took place is in Iveagh Crescent, where 28 incidents were reported, 16 of which stemmed from 2 callers. Complaints centred on youths perceived to behaving rowdily, smoking cannabis and objects thrown at windows, doors banged on and in one instance electricity in a block being switched off. Ages of those involved are mixed, from 10 to 18 but it appears that a group of 15/16 year olds are most responsible. Times were from 6pm to 9pm, with Wednesdays and Thursdays most common.

Of the 12 incidents on St Martins Crescent, 5 involved youths, 3 were domestic related (same address on each incident) and 3 complaints about neighbours (again the same address as the domestic related incidents). 7 incidents came from one caller, who has been encouraged to report ASB to the police, which has included youths climbing on scaffolding, playing football and letting off fireworks.

Of the 12 incidents on Denton Road, at least 8 involved youths with a variety of ASB or perceived ASB taking place such as playing football, riding mopeds, throwing objects, attempting to damage a lamp post and disturbing events at The Denton Social Centre. Incidents were most common during the week and between 3 and 6pm.

In the area as a whole one caller believed the youths came from the children's home nearby.

There are several other areas where low level clustering of incidents occur:

- **Church Hill:** 21 incidents on this road, 15 of which involved youths with the remainder including low numbers of domestic related incidents and complaints about neighbours and parking issues. Incidents were most common at the weekends with 3/4pm and 8pm being the most frequent times. Youth related

incidents involved underage drinking, potential vandalism and throwing objects. Incidents in recent weeks have been centred around a derelict hospital but over the analysed period there have been reported problems at St Michaels Church and the car park at St Luke's Court.

- **Elphick Avenue:** 19 incidents on this road and roads nearby (Lewes Road & Robinson Road). Incidents in this area were however mixed in nature with 7 involving youths, 2 neighbour complaints, 2 reports of fighting at or outside The Jolly Boatman Public House, 2 drunk individuals etc.
- **The Downs (South Heighton/Denton):** 12 incidents of motorbikes on The Downs and roads leading to the area (5 on Cantercrow Hill). These incidents occurred throughout the week and at various times from 10am to 9pm.

Criminal Damage

The following is based on CADDIE Operational Data for the analysed period. CADDIE Data is downloaded from the live system at Sussex Police each month. This data has not been audited or verified by Statisticians at Police HQ, therefore it represents a reflection of crime rather than the authorised and fully verified "Performance Data". CADDIE strips and sanitises the data, cleaning addresses so locations can be mapped. Only those offences where there is sufficient location information are included in the CADDIE data in order to highlight and hotspot the reflection of crime and disorder in an area. Therefore the offences shown are **sanitised**, in other words locations have been aggregated to comply with data protection, thereby allowing the information to be shared with outside agencies.

Definition: Criminal damage is defined as "deliberately, or recklessly, destroying or damaging somebody else's home, building, vehicle or other items (excluding dwellings, buildings or vehicles)". It can also include a threat or possession with intent to commit criminal damage and arson (deliberately destroying or damaging property, by fire).

Context: There were 178 Criminal Damage offences in the analysed period, this accounts for a 31% of all crime in the Newhaven area. As with ASB incidents the number of Criminal Damage offences in Newhaven is relatively high compared to levels in Lewes District as a whole. In the 6 month analysed period, around 21% of all Criminal Damage Offences in The District took place in the analysed Newhaven area. The latest population estimates show that the Newhaven area accounts for 14%⁶ of Lewes District residents, therefore the rate of incidents is higher in Newhaven. In fact the rate per 1,000 of the population is higher in Newhaven than in Peacehaven and Seaford, whilst on a par with the town of Lewes.

Note: Patterns of Criminal Damage Offences can be skewed somewhat by multiple offences for example a number of cars scratched at similar times on the same day, wherever possible any sprees have been taken into account.

Type of Offence: The most common type of damage is to vehicles, making up half of all offences, a significant proportion of these (46%) involving damaged wing mirrors. Criminal Damage to dwellings (17%) is the next most common offence type, with windows damaged most, followed by "Criminal Damage – other" (16%) which can be

⁶ Population Estimates 2006 – Parishes, CACI 2006

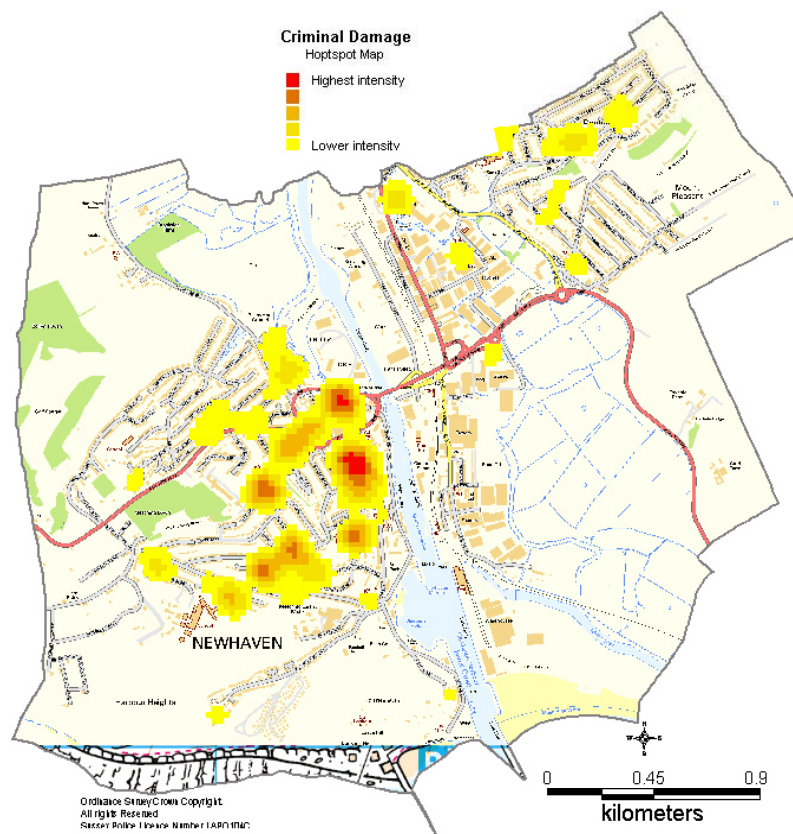
against property that is not a vehicle or a dwelling or other building (such as schools, shops and offices), in the analysed period the main types of “other offences” have been against gardens and commercial yards, with damage to fences most common.

In all 10 offences were flagged as having a domestic element, 6% of all Criminal Damage offences in the town, largely damage to dwellings. None were flagged as being racist or homophobic.

When? Time/Day: Defining a time (and day) for Criminal Damage is problematic because often there is no specific time when the offence occurred, however it is possible to assign weighted probabilities in order to generate a time pattern. Offences are most likely to take place at night, with the peak period commencing around 6pm and continuing through to 2am. Weekends see the most offences with Fridays followed by Saturdays being the peak days.

Where: The location of offences is spread throughout the area. The map below shows the concentration of offences. As can be seen there are a number of areas that show up as having a concentration of offences (shaded red) but these are often due to a spree of offences taking place over one night or weekend, with the remaining periods suffering few offences which occur periodically.

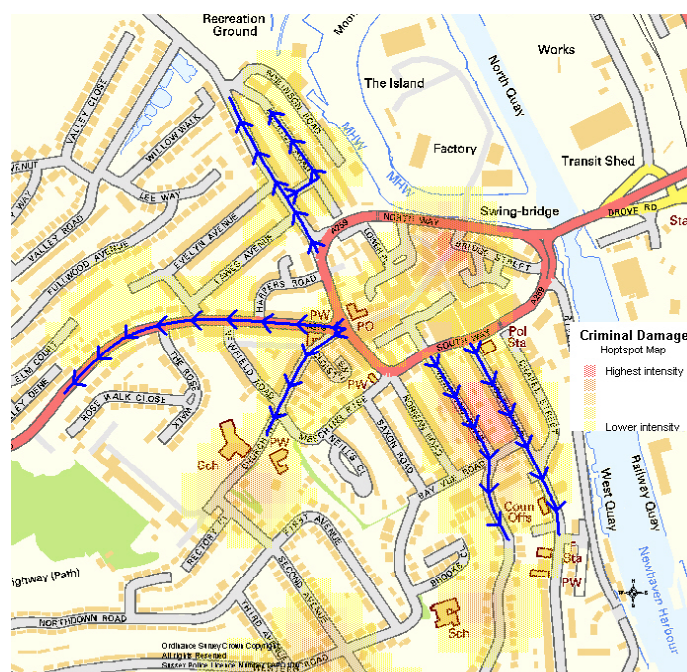
Map 5: Criminal Damage



There are however some patterns that can be seen. There is a distinct pattern of offences emanating from the town centre and moving along the main thoroughfares out of the central area such as Meeching Road, South Road, Brighton Road, Lewes Road and Elphick Road. Offences along these routes are most prominent at weekends

and at night. Over half of the offences are against vehicles with wing mirrors damaged being most common. The inference from this is that much of the damage in these areas are caused by people making their way home from the town centre with alcohol playing an important role.

Map 6: Town Centre and Routes Away from Area



There are also pockets of offences in other areas, many of which were also highlighted under the ASB section of this report.

- **Church Hill:** 14 offences on this road, 7 of which occurred at St Michaels Church and involved broken windows, lights and a door panel as well as one graffiti offence. There were also 6 offences against vehicles with paint work scratched, lights damaged and dents in doors. Offences largely took place on Thursdays to Sundays, with most occurring at night.
- **Denton/South Heighton Area:** 23 offences with 7 on Denton Road, 5 on Iveagh Crescent and 4 on Heighton Road. 10 were to vehicles with wing mirrors damaged or dents to bodywork, there were also 8 offences against dwellings half of which had doors or fences kicked. Offences in this area were most common from 5pm to 10pm, with Fridays being the most frequent day
- **Gibbon Road/Hillcrest Road Area:** 35 offences in the area which incorporates Hillcrest Road (11 offences), Gibbon Road (7), Second Avenue (5), Hanson Road (5), Western Road (3) and Southdown Road (3). Offences were most common at night (from 7pm onwards) with a strong weekend peak. The majority of offences (25) were to vehicles, with damaged wing mirrors most frequent, with 6 offences on one night.

Offenders

Of those offences where offender or suspect details were available, the majority of offenders/suspects were male, with ages ranging from 6 to 55. However most identified offenders/suspects were young, with 70% aged Under 25, with 18 and 19 year olds the most common single ages.

National Research & Criminal Damage Check List

National and local research has shown that although termed as a “minor crime”, Criminal Damage does effect public perception and can lead to more serious offences. Generally offenders are young (predominantly aged 21 or under) and offending behaviour might start with Criminal Damage then escalate. Reasons for committing the crime include alcohol; for the “buzz” or being bored; and revenge / annoyance with the victim. However most offences are committed on the spur of the moment. This can make assessing and preventing Criminal Damage problematic, as there is often no thought behind the offence (as one would find in burglary) or distinct crime generators (say in PPVC, where an alcohol fuelled attack requires an offender to come into contact with a victim, hence many offences around town centres which have pubs and people populating the pubs or on their way home).

Risk factors for becoming victims include : high (or relatively high) crime in general, cars parked in the street near the owner’s home, a high proportion of young people in an area, the night time economy and on a route away from a town centre or particular venue (a “red route”).

Other factors that can be addressed are:

- Poor natural or other surveillance: can it be improved? e.g. cutting hedges back or down; pruning trees; replacing solid fencing with something easier to see through (& less attractive for graffiti)
- Sense of ownership or responsibility within an area
- Are local communities (including young people) engaged in looking after their area?
- The use of public space (encourage people to use them for legitimate purposes? i.e. promote utilisation by law-abiding members of the public)
- Well maintained and managed areas? Repairs, bins emptied etc
- Well-designed and located fencing; landscaping; planting etc? e.g. poor fence design and positioning; overgrown vegetation can provide hiding places for offenders and the availability of potential missiles
- Positioning and design of street furniture? e.g. low walls that might provide seating and hence encourage young people to congregate; telephone boxes and bus stops; telephone junction boxes
- Is parking for cars an issue? Cars parked in garages/driveways are at least risk
- Inadequate street or other communal parking? Can lead to disputes between neighbours. If limited alternatives to on street parking, can drivers be encouraged to fold in wing mirrors, retract aerials?
- Adequate street lighting? Though additional street lights may themselves become a target for vandalism
- Possibility of physical protection against criminal damage? e.g. replacing or covering frequently damaged items with replaceable “sacrificial” alternatives (such as plastic films or sheets over windows that can be quickly and more cheaply replaced if damaged or disfigured) or more durable alternatives (such as laminated glass, grills or shutters – though the latter may be more susceptible to graffiti).
- Can facilities be provided to give potential offenders something less destructive to do?

- Underage drinking : The Offender Crime and Justice Survey (2004) shows a significant proportion of offences are committed whilst offenders are under the influence of alcohol
- Reparation, diversion & early intervention?
- Repeat Victims considered? Protocol for dealing with repeats (as with burglary)?
- Do Victims need support? i.e. victim and offender are known to each other (security needs, deter offender by visit, housing action, mediation etc).

Conclusion

Newhaven has high levels of both ASB Incidents and Criminal Damage Offences when compared to the rest of Lewes.

Anti Social Behaviour can come in many forms and as such causes can also be varied. For example in the Gibbon Road area of the town there are a number of factors that influence ASB. Firstly the Newsagents and area around it provides a meeting place and focus for young people. The fact that they congregate in the area in groups could provoke concern among some residents and add to the number of incidents, though this not to say that ASB is not already taking place. The area is also located near Tideway's school which attract additional young people to the area and the shop. There is also a problem with mini motorbikes which may be due to local residents but the presence of open spaces nearby may also attract others and encourage some to purchase these bikes locally thinking that they have somewhere to use them. The area is also one of the most deprived areas⁷ in Lewes a factor that can not be ignored.

In the Town Centre as expected the influence of the night time economy and the role of alcohol is apparent in the time and day pattern. There are also several points which attract young people such as the car park, the supermarket and area around certain shops.

In the Denton/South Heighton Area there were a number of complaints from two callers. Further information is needed on these but they could stem from vigilant and concerned residents but may also originate from clashes between neighbours or overzealous reporting. The fact that one resident has been encouraged to report all incidents may also have led to an artificial increase in numbers in the area (though this should not be seen as a bad thing, for the more that is reported the easier to access the real nature of ASB)

Certain environmental factors can also increase ASB, as was seen in Church Hill around a derelict hospital but also around a church and car park which can provide seemingly secluded areas for youths to congregate. This area also experienced numbers of criminal damage offences.

Criminal Damage in the town is more sporadic, with a number of sprees skewing patterns. Many of the offences involve damage to vehicles and wing mirrors in particular. It is also likely that this type of offence is underreported. There are concentrations in and around the town centre and routes directly out of the area.

⁷ Index of Multiple deprivation

National research has shown that Criminal Damage is committed by young offenders with reasons for committing the crime including alcohol, the “buzz”, being bored and revenge / annoyance with the victim. However most offences are committed on the spur of the moment. These factors are certainly present in Newhaven, with the time and day pattern suggesting most offences occur at night and at weekends, where one would expect alcohol to play an increased role. Linking with ASB, the boredom, buzz or grudge against the victim factors can also be seen in many areas.