

Enhanced Bus Partnership Anti-Social Behaviour

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Presented by

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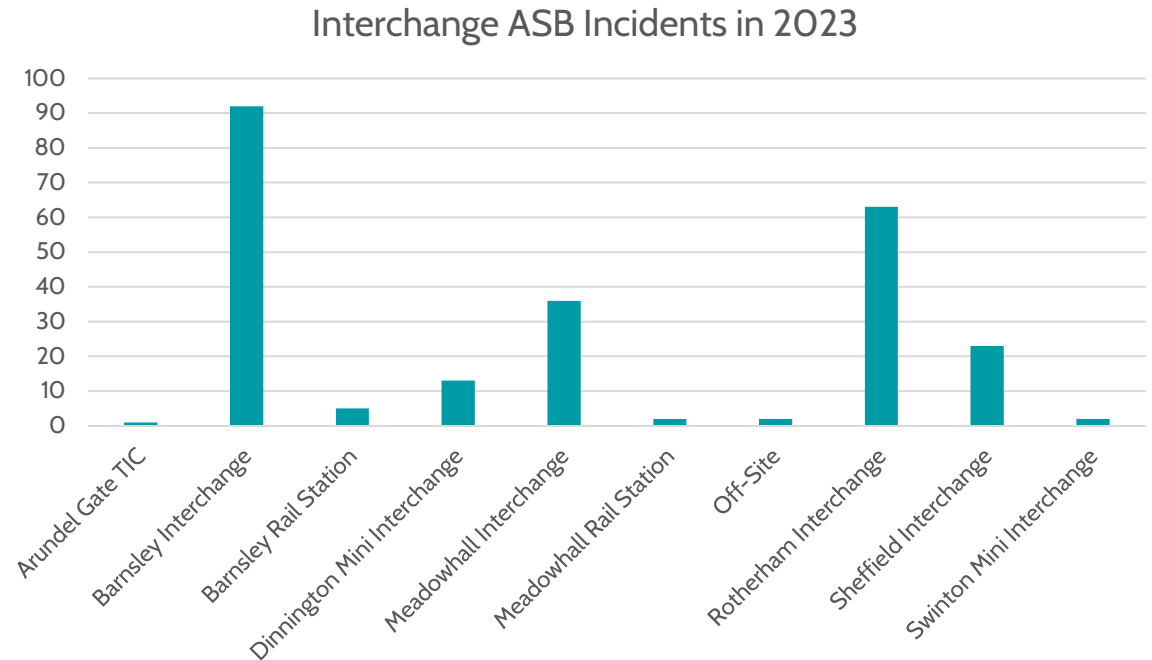


Background

- Antisocial Behaviour has been a perpetual issue across South Yorkshire, much like it is in any other large metropolitan areas of the country.
- There have been issues, particularly focussed in the past around town and city centres such as in Barnsley and Rotherham in previous years which have caused issues at our interchanges.
- The problem previously has been managed and contained historically through partnership working and interventions from Local Authorities and Police, and tends to focus on known individuals, families and communities.
- We have limited resources; we currently have one dedicated TravelSafe Partnership Officer in Karen Holmes from SYP and this resource has been in place almost continuously since September 2008 (Karen commenced in post in 2020)
- SYMCA have put in place additional staff at Barnsley Interchange at the start of 2023/24 and again more recently to deal with ASB issues on site.
- We implemented body-worn video on our Customer Service Teams in 2017 as a direct response to issues in Barnsley interchange at the time.
- We are now seeing ASB become more prevalent in suburbs and smaller communities.

Numbers

- The latest numbers of ASB across the region show a total of 239 reported incidents at our interchanges between January and November 2023.
- As noted in the chart, Barnsley Interchange has the highest overall number of incidents (averaging around 8 a month)
- In addition to the above, there have been notable issues on the general network outside of our interchanges in:
 - Thurnscoe
 - Grimethorpe
 - Goldthorpe
 - Dinnington
 - Castlebeck (Sheffield)
- 90 reported incidents to SYP between January and October 2023 in Dearne North (with a further 17 recorded by BMBC) which have resulted in services been withdrawn or suspended, with Thurnscoe unserved since end of August 2023.



Interventions from Partners

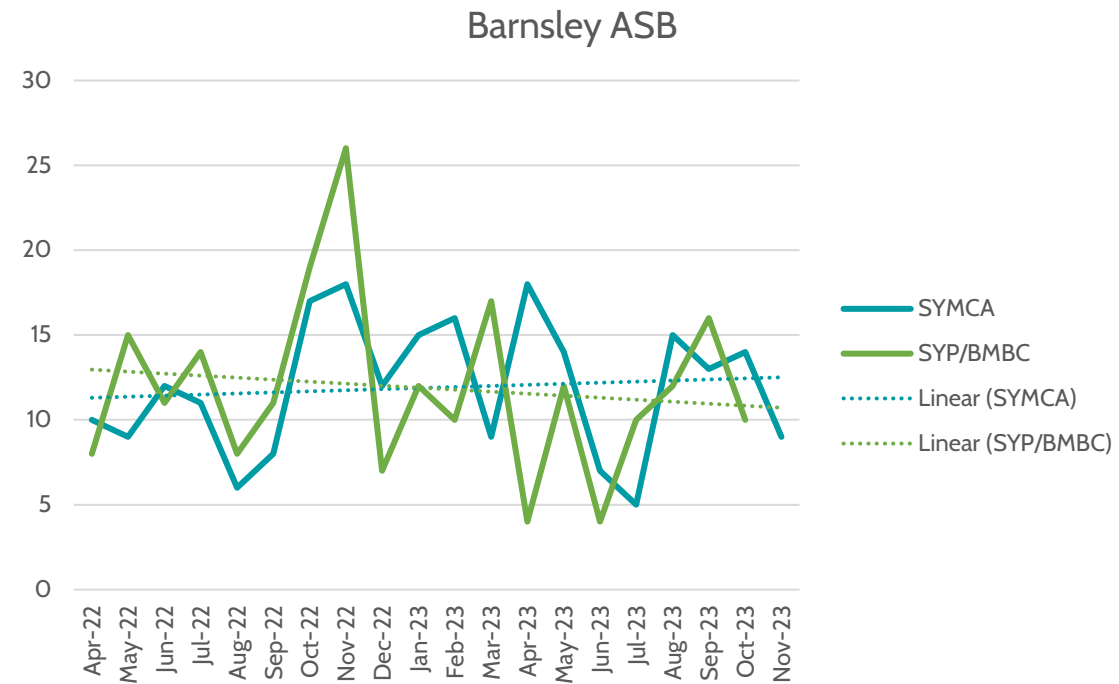
- South Yorkshire Police (SYP) have been instrumental in coordinating a response to the reported ASB but have limited resources available. These include:
 - School visits to identify and issue ASB warning letters to known individuals
 - Reviewing CCTV to identify and speak to nominals
 - One further nominal referred to YOT for a conditional caution following their involvement in ASB on the 226 service in Thurnscoe incidents in October.
 - Apprehending known individuals (including one now in a Youth Offending unit)
 - Accompanying drivers on vehicles
 - Visits to the depots to speak to the union and drivers
- There is now in place weekly tactical debriefs between SYP, Stagecoach and BMBC in respect of the Thurnscoe issues.
- A joint collaboration with SYP and Youth Justice Prevention Worker on the Turnaround Project has taken place with ASB presentations into the schools in the area.
- SYP undertook “Operation Voyager” whereby 4 plain clothed officers travelled on and off buses between 10am and 3pm and a further 4 plain clothed officers from 3pm until 6pm. The officers were riding the route in full uniform and getting off at known ASB hotspots.

Interventions from Partners

- Three Trojan bus operations, one in Page Hall (Wordsworth Ave) at the end of September and two in November in the Manor (Castlebeck) and Stainforth area.
- As a result, one nominal referred to identified and referred to CPS for a charging decision for their repeated ASB at Castlebeck Avenue.
- Barnsley Neighbourhood team for Cudworth and Grimethorpe conducting patrols in the area in November.
- Rotherham and Barnsley interchanges have been identified as hotspot areas by SYP and are subject to Op Civitas patrols by SYP officers and the respective local authorities. This has seen an increase in visibility patrols in both interchanges since August 2023.
- Operation Grip (SVC) and Operation Civitas (ASB) conducted a passive drug dog patrol operations at Rotherham Interchange at the end of September, Sheffield Interchange in October and Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster Interchanges in November.
- SYMCA have funded two additional resources at Barnsley Interchange in place until 21 December.
- SYMCA continue to coordinate a progress calls on Thurnscoe issues. Data on the frequency and timing of incidents has now been shared with Stagecoach to review ahead of any reinstatement decision.
- There is work underway at investigating how live bus services in hotspot areas can be better connected to allow real-time reporting of incidents (e.g. live CCTV feed on vehicles) ahead of full reinstatement.

Recommendations and Next Steps

- We should recognise that the issues are seasonal in nature.
- Whilst the multi-agency calls bring together the necessary partners, is there an opportunity for allocation of more dedicated (coordinating) resources?
- We also know that our single TravelSafe officer (Karen Holmes) is often stretched dealing with multiple concurrent issues across South Yorkshire.
- We know that other Combined Authority areas are investing in more resources (WYCA have invested in 15 PCSO's); is there an opportunity to invest to reduce incurred costs?
- There is a need to ensure operator response is proportionate and consistent so communities understand the reasons for temporary (or indefinite) service suspension.
- We need to get across a clearer “Zero Tolerance” message to communities that the actions of a small minority of residents (almost always young people) have significant detrimental effect on the rest of the community in being able to access a bus service.
- We should engage with SYP senior management to share this priority area and understand what wider community policing can be undertaken (in particular with the expected future PCC powers from May 2024).



Thank you

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