



Working with residents and communities to tackle ASB

Baseline findings 2011



Introduction

Over the last two decades tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) and its underlying causes has become a core priority for landlords and their tenants. Efforts to reverse the negative impact that ASB has on individuals and communities is clearly reflected in the investment and improvements that landlords, local authorities and their partner agencies continue to make in the provision of comprehensive ASB services. Landlords are also pivotal to the success of community safety partnerships (CSPs), ensuring partners and agencies work together effectively to deliver a balanced approach of intervention, prevention and enforcement within their communities and neighbourhoods.

Most recently, the critical role that tenants and residents can play supporting landlords to effectively tackle ASB has been recognised and welcomed. Championed by the work of Baroness Helen Newlove, Advisor to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), tenants and residents living and working within our estates and neighbourhoods have a vital role to play, working with their landlords to examine and challenge existing service provision. Effective engagement provides opportunities for tenants and residents to shape ASB services at a very local level, and empowers individuals to have real influence over the setting of local priorities.

Recognising this as a key challenge within the sector, DCLG has supported second year funding for the ASB Action Team, delivered in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH). The team will continue their work with landlords across England, building on the success of their first year, but there will be an increased focus during 2011/12 on tenant and resident engagement. The team will work with existing and emerging tenant panels and their respective

landlords to support and further improve the relationship that exists between landlords and the communities they serve, to drive the development and delivery of effective locally focused ASB services.

To support the work of the team and to obtain a picture of existing practice in this area the team has conducted an online baseline survey with landlords across England.

Over the coming months the baseline survey findings will be used by the team to:

- build a comprehensive picture of how landlords engage with tenants and residents in shaping and providing ASB services
- help inform and tailor the advisors' approach to working with landlords around the involvement and empowerment of their tenants and residents to reduce ASB
- support and influence national policy and practice agendas
- identify innovative and effective practice examples which will be shared with practitioners through CIH's ASB practice hub <http://www.practicehub.cih.co.uk/>

The key findings are set out in this report.

Executive Summary

The baseline survey of registered providers in England was conducted and analysed by CIH during May 2011. Key findings indicate:

- The majority of landlords have invested in a tenant and resident resource, and report their communication strategies for tenant and resident involvement to be either good or excellent. However, a fifth of respondents acknowledge that improvements still need to be made around communicating with tenants and residents in relation to their ASB services.
- Customer profile information allows landlords to understand the make up of their communities to inform decision making processes in relation to both service delivery and customer communication. While customer profile information is being recorded by 67% of landlords surveyed, more than one third of respondents felt that this was an area that could be improved upon. Of the respondents that do capture customer profile information, the information is not widely used to strategically plan or target resources more effectively.
- Methods being used to capture tenants' and residents' views are changing; with new and innovative ways in which to work alongside their tenants and residents emerging. However, there continues to be inconsistency across the sector, and a high number of landlords still rely largely on 'traditional' methods of involvement such as estate walkabouts, and tenants and residents meetings to engage with communities.
- There is some evidence of investment in the training and skills development of individuals and tenants groups. However, there is a need to extend and improve this range of support and activities to build capacity and enable tenants and residents to take a more active role in initiatives such as community justice panels and good neighbourhood agreements.
- Landlords are widely aware of the proposed introduction of locally elected Police Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in May 2012, although 64% of respondents are unclear of the role of the PCCs and how they will operate. Only a very small number (7%) of landlords have started to plan at a strategic level with key stakeholders around how they will work with their PCC.
- Landlords shared common views on the challenges to be faced over the next 12 months. Issues including adapting to the proposed new formal powers and tools, substantial reductions in budgets and local accountability are all concerns that were commonly raised within survey responses.

Over the coming twelve months the ASB Action Team will continue to work closely with landlords across England to overcome the challenges identified and to capture and share good practice.

The ASB Action Team

The ASB Action Team, delivered in partnership with CIH, consists of four advisors. The team was established in April 2010, and has received continued funding from the DCLG for a second year to work directly with landlords and their tenants and residents. The team provide a valuable resource to the sector, supporting landlords to develop and improve their ASB services at no charge to the provider. Services can be accessed at www.cih.org/asbactionteam

Methodology

Housing organisations across England were invited to complete an online baseline survey, conducted during May 2011. The survey was emailed to all previous RESPECT signatories and established ASB advisors contacts. In addition the survey was promoted to all CIH, HouseMark and Social Landlord Crime and Nuisance Group members electronically.

The questionnaire was designed to capture information specifically around the relationship between the management of ASB services and community involvement. A total of 114 housing organisations completed the survey, with responses received from arms length management organisations, (ALMOs), housing associations, large scale voluntary stock transfers (LSVTs), local authority housing providers and large housing groups.

To supplement the common themes for development highlighted in this report HouseMark has contributed a number of practice examples. All examples referenced in this summary are available to access through the ASB practice hub.

Findings from the survey

Findings from the survey have helped to identify a number of key challenges for landlords over the coming months, both evidencing existing levels of tenant and resident involvement and highlighting where improvement within the sector could be made. The survey has also identified areas of examples of innovative practice and strong partnership working within communities. Key findings are set out below:

Staff structure

The largest single majority of landlords do have a resident involvement resource within the organisation although 20% of respondents highlighted that improvements need to be made in relation to how they communicate with tenants and residents around ASB services.

This finding is echoed in benchmarking information supplied by HouseMark (below) that shows that landlords are spending comparable amounts, per property and employee salary, on delivering resident involvement and ASB services.

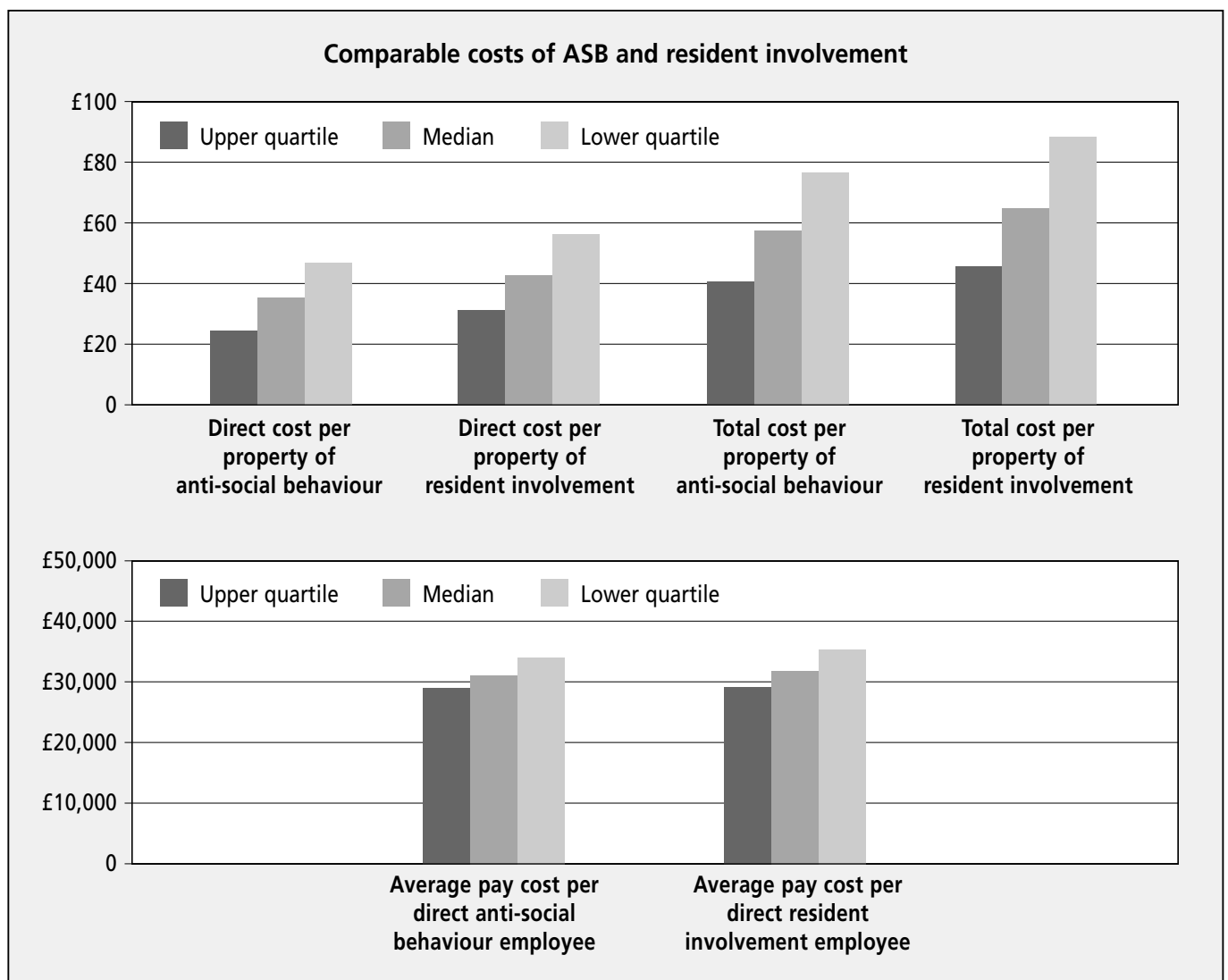


Table sourced: HouseMark benchmarking (2011)

Customer profiling

Whilst 67% of landlords rated their customer profiling information as good or excellent, almost one third of respondents indicated that their organisations customer profiling information could be improved.

Of the landlords that do capture customer profiling information 22% do not use this information to plan and target resources.



Table sourced: Baseline survey (2011) CIH

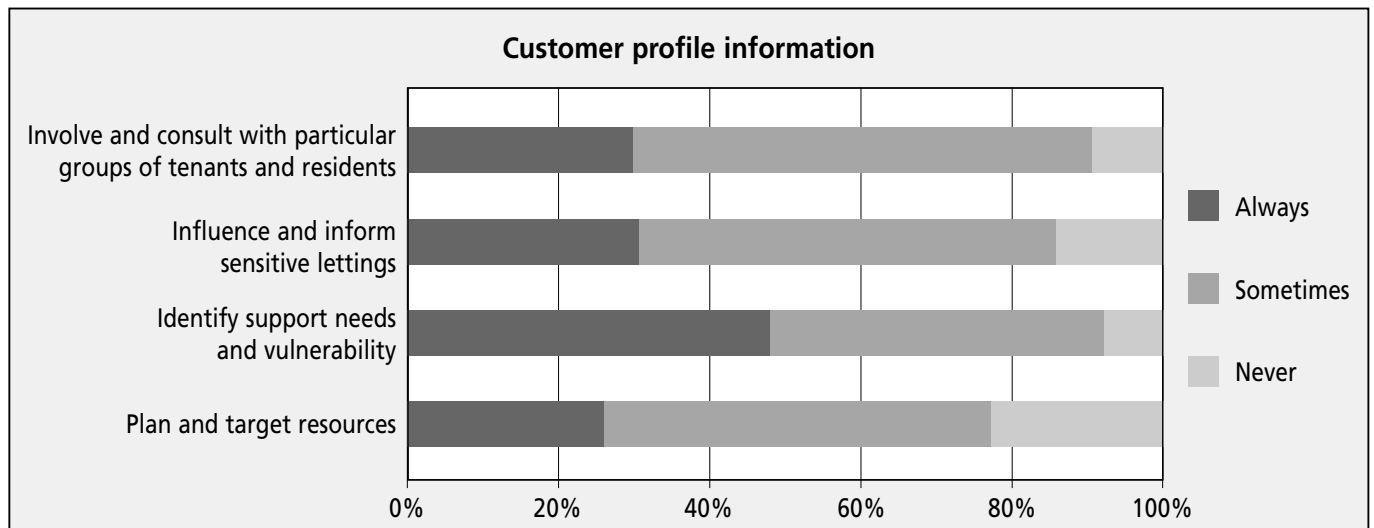


Table sourced: Baseline survey (2011) CIH

HouseMark practice example: Using customer insight

South Staffordshire Housing Association (SSHA) has produced a detailed 'neighbourhood strategy'. The strategy provides a detailed analysis of who is living on each estate and the nature of reported ASB. Information is then used to seek solutions and improve the lives of SSHA's residents.

Tenant and resident involvement

80% of respondents rated the involvement of tenants and residents as good or excellent. Not surprisingly, respondents have indicated that 'traditional' methods of engaging with tenants and residents are most commonly used rather than more innovative communications such as social networks and online surveys.

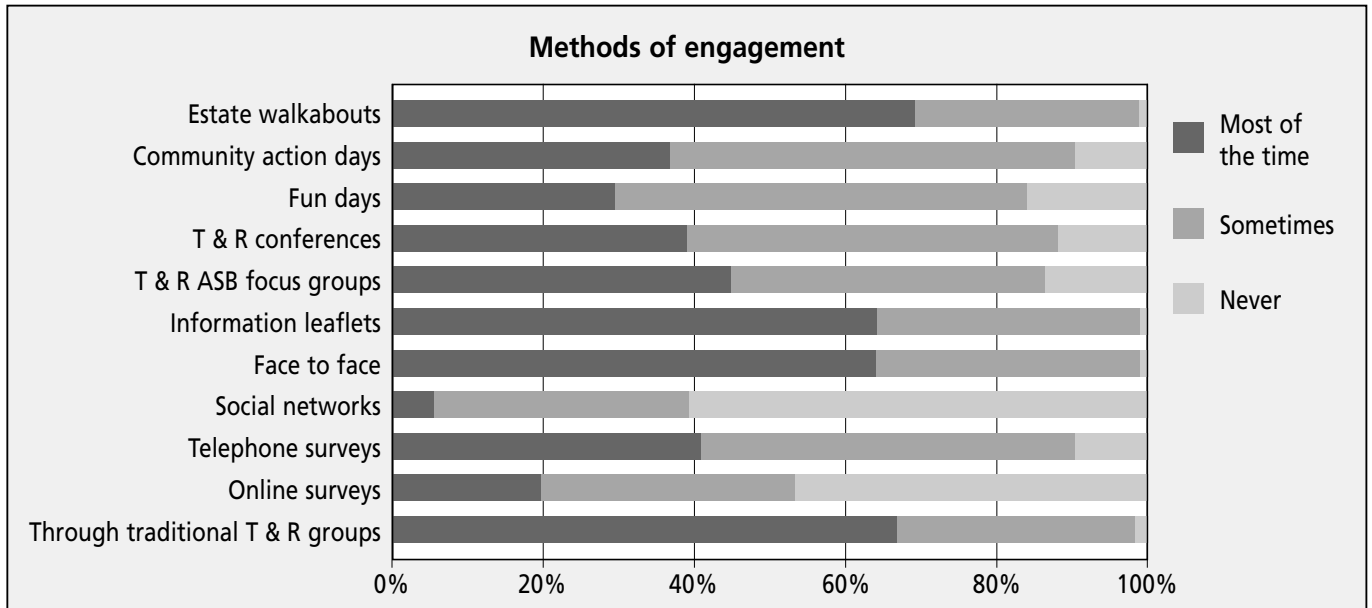


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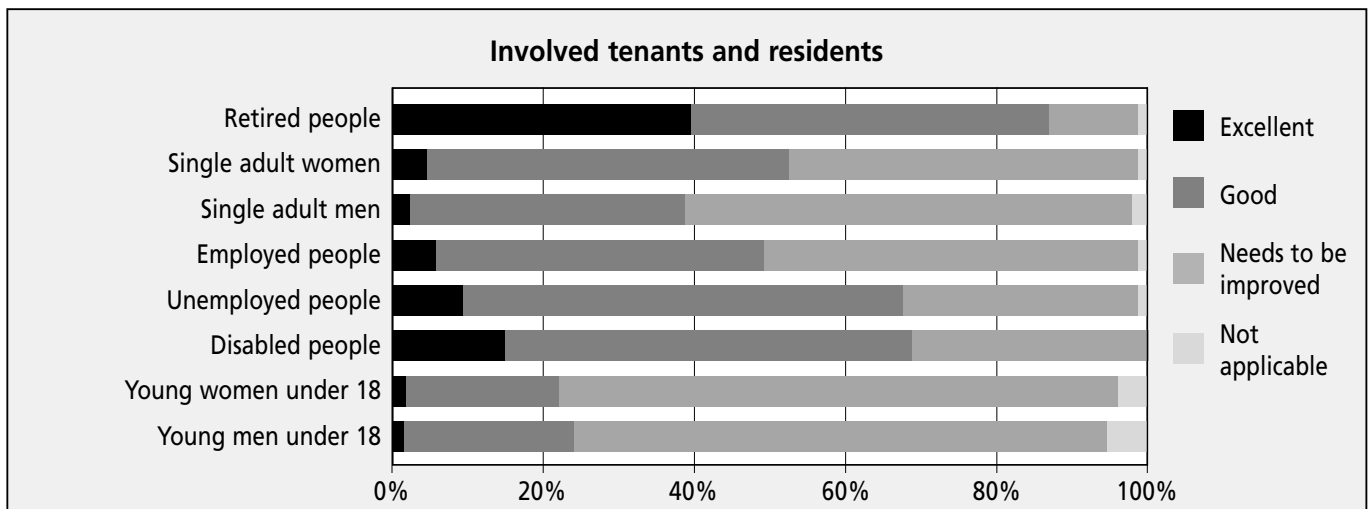


Table sourced: Baseline survey (2011) CIH

HouseMark practice example: Modern methods of communication

- Adactus Housing Association conducts online ASB surveys via its blog
- Derwent Living and Gateshead Housing Company use Twitter to highlight ASB consultation
- Knowsley Housing Trust use Facebook to communicate with residents about ASB

Figures on page 6 and below also illustrate that where landlords are using traditional methods of communication, they are not necessarily targeting a representative cross section of the community. 71% of respondents stated that communications with young men under 18 need to be improved with similar figures for employed people, single adults, BME communities, LGBT communities and young families.

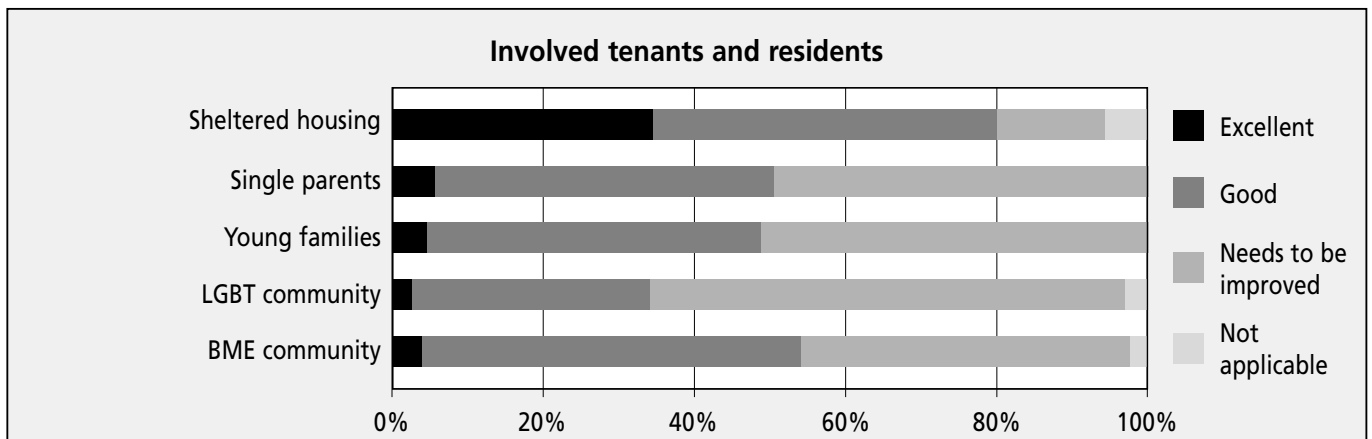


Table sourced: Baseline survey (2011) CIH

HouseMark practice example: Communicating with difficult to reach communities

Bolton at Home local offer – In order to improve its anti-social behaviour service, Bolton at Home's trailblazer set out to develop a set of local service standards with customers in hard-to-reach groups and other key stakeholders.

Tenant and resident activism

The vast majority of respondents do not have any mechanisms in place which allow their tenants and residents to be actively involved in deciding how perpetrators of ASB should be dealt with. 89% of respondents do not use community justice panels as a method of resolving ASB. This is a relatively new approach to tackling ASB and is an area that the team plan to help landlords develop further.

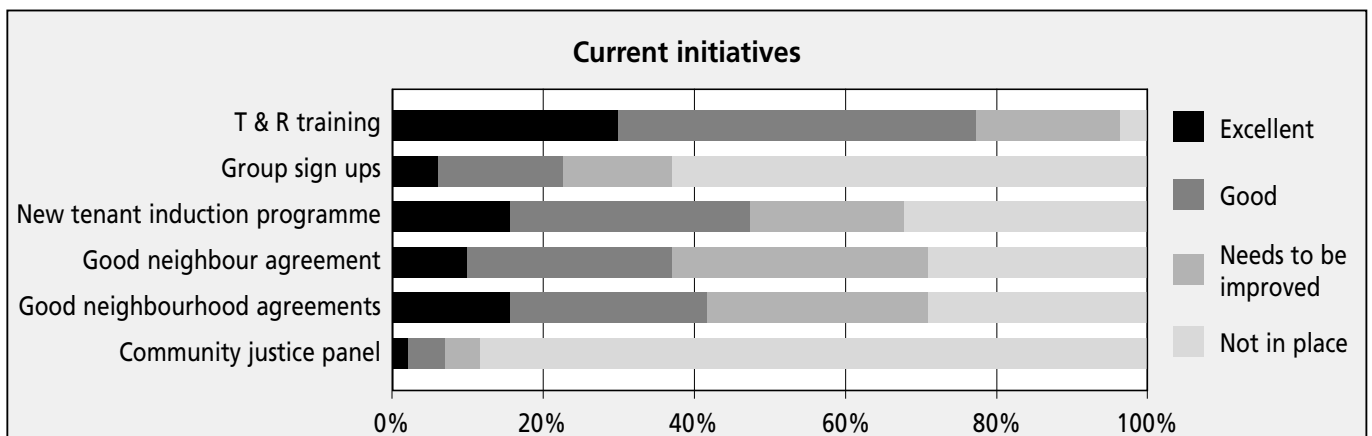


Table sourced: Baseline survey (2011) CIH

CIH practice example: Tenant and Resident Activism (UKHA finalists 2010)

Westminster Tenants and Residents Association (WESTRA) in partnership with Liverpool Mutual Homes and other key partners, introduced Intensive Community Payback Scheme, and Good Neighbourhood Agreements. This has resulted in significant reduction in ASB and increased activism and involvement from the community.

Shaping services with tenants and residents

Almost half of the respondents do not have a tenant/resident scrutiny panel in place to actively scrutinise ASB services. Of the 56% that do have a panel, 49% have recognised the need to improve how tenants get involved in budget setting.

Of those landlords who said they had an ASB scrutiny panel, over three quarters delivered training to their panel members and rated their training as either excellent (29%) or good (48%).

This demonstrates that landlords recognise training and capacity building is vital if tenants choose to be actively involved.

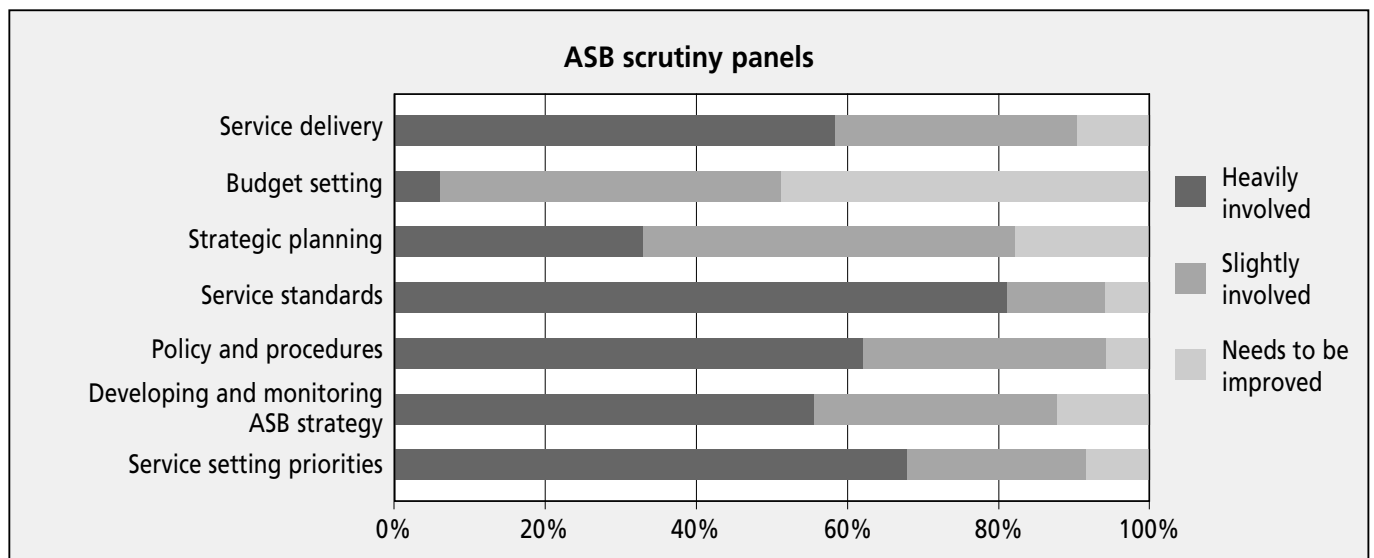


Table sourced: Baseline survey (2011) CIH

CIH practice example: Tenant Scrutiny

AmicusHorizon are recognised by the TSA and NHFA for their groundbreaking work with residents. Their approach to tenant governance and co-regulation provides an example of how residents are involved at all levels and are actively involved in decision making and scrutiny.

Planning for the introduction of Police Crime Commissioners

91% of respondents were aware of the introduction of Police Crime Commissioner's in 2012. However, 64% of those who completed the survey did not have a clear understanding of what the role of the PCC will be. Only 7% of respondents stated that they have started to work at a strategic level with key partners to plan and organise how they will work with their PCC.

Sharing information with tenants and residents

80% of those landlords who completed the survey stated that their tenant and resident communication strategy was either excellent (25%) or good (55%).

HouseMark practice example: Providing performance information to residents

Metropolitan Housing Partnership uses HouseMark's ASB benchmarking data to create comparative reports, to keep residents informed about its activity to address ASB and to manage performance within the ASB service.

Challenges for 2011/12

The survey provided an opportunity for respondents to raise any challenges they foresee for the sector over the coming year. A number of themes emerged with the following challenges being commonly identified:

- preparing for the introduction of the new formal powers and tools, and effects this may have on current processes and practices. Specific issues identified related to increased staff training costs and possible case delays with courts testing new legislation
- concerns about the future of the ASB injunction
- managing tenant and resident expectations, with landlords expected to fill the gaps that are now being created due to public sector spending cuts and rationalisation of resources across community safety partnerships
- making efficiency savings without affecting quality of service provision
- responding to local authority and police spending cuts and the resultant potential reduction in resources. Particular concerns related to reduction in youth diversionary activities, family intervention projects and local neighbourhood policing
- improving scrutiny amongst tenants and residents and getting more of them actively involved in shaping services.

The ASB Action Team will continue to work closely with landlords across England to address these concerns and share emerging good practice.

Survey respondents

The charts below show a breakdown of respondents by organisation:

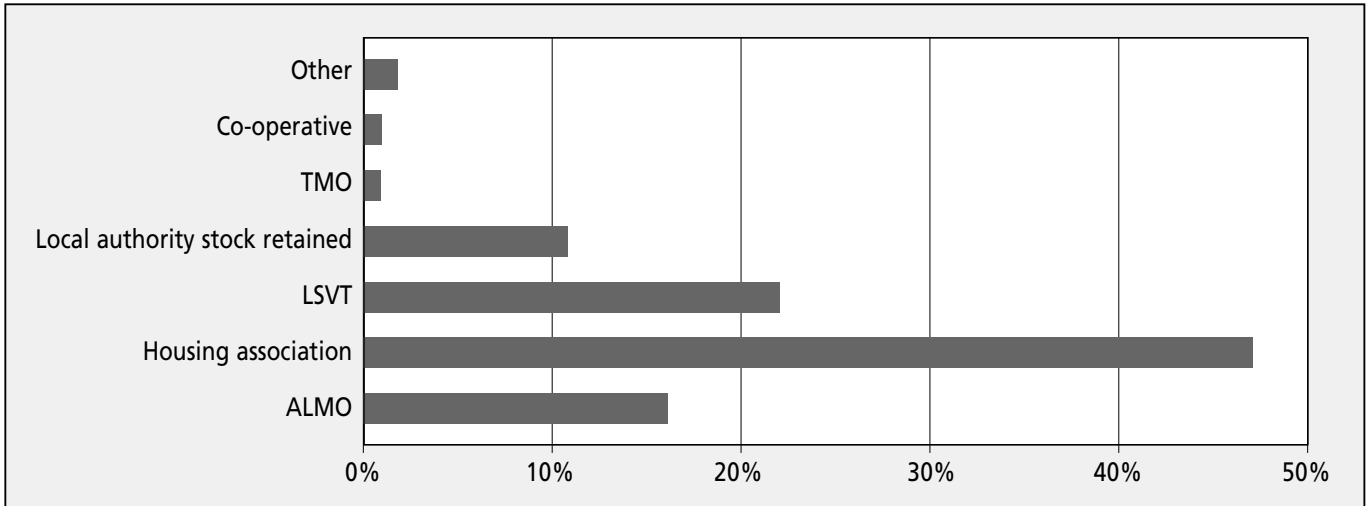


Table sourced: Baseline survey (2011) CIH

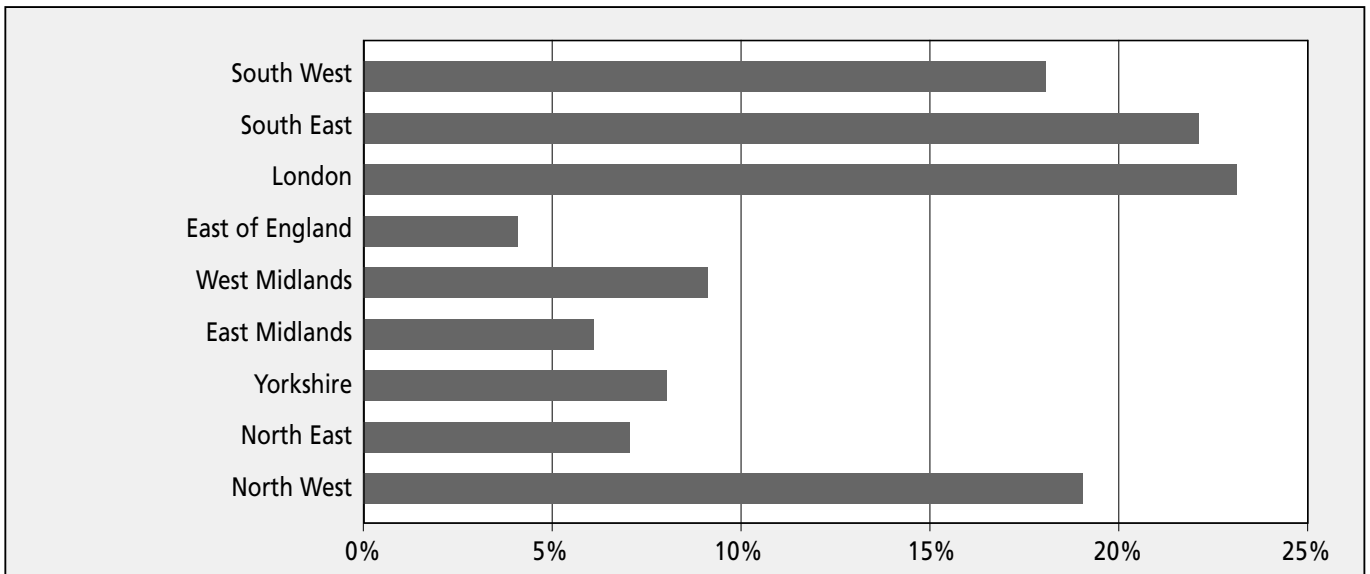


Table sourced: Baseline survey (2011) CIH

Acknowledgments

To support CIH's baseline findings 2011 HouseMark has provided readers with benchmarking information in relation to the costs of ASB services and tenant and resident involvement. This can be accessed via CIH's ASB practice hub at www.practicehub.cih.co.uk

Full details of the practice examples used to illustrate this report, and those provided by survey respondents can be accessed at www.practicehub.cih.co.uk or www.housemark.co.uk

The ASB Action Team would also like to thank all those respondents who took part in the survey.



Contacting the team

To discuss these findings or for advice or support from the ASB Action Team please contact a member of the team:

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Further information about the work of the team is available at:
www.cih.org/asbactionteam