

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

Antisocial Behaviour Strategy

2024 - 2028



Working together
to keep our communities safe

Dumfries &

Galloway

Together is
Better

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Foreword

This Antisocial Behaviour Strategy provides the framework by which public services, voluntary agencies, private sector and registered social landlords in Dumfries and Galloway will work together to tackle antisocial behaviour across the region over the next five years. It builds upon the strong partnership arrangements which exist and have been proven to deliver a valuable service in our area.

All partners involved in the development of this strategy understand the need to work collaboratively to achieve a common goal of keeping local communities safe and making our public feel safe. We all recognise that tackling the scourge of antisocial behaviour is not the responsibility of one single agency, and collectively this strategy provides a commitment to ensuring that effective information sharing and joint working approaches will continue to prevent and confront problems at an early stage.

We recognise the need to listen and respond to the issues which matter most to our local communities; to involve, empower and inform them to promote community wellbeing and a sense of safety. We will recognise vulnerability and will prioritise our resources to support those in greatest need of protection.

Dumfries and Galloway Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group

Introduction

Antisocial behaviour removes vitality and confidence from individuals and communities, affects health and wellbeing, and has long been recognised as a barrier towards prosperity and ambition.

Dumfries and Galloway's multi-agency Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group, want to see an ambitious, prosperous and confident Dumfries and Galloway where people can achieve their potential and will work together closely as partners to deliver on the outcomes of this strategy.

The Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 defines antisocial behaviour as occurring where any person:

'Acts in a manner that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress; or pursues a course of conduct that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress to at least one person, who is not of the same household as that person.'

This legislation places an obligation upon Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Chief Constable of Police Scotland to provide a written strategy for tackling antisocial behaviour, and it is crucial that we are able to deliver a service that meets our community needs.

It is important that all efforts to tackle antisocial behaviour are seen as part of the wider Health and Wellbeing, Work and Where we live priorities as outlined in the 2023-2033 Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcome Improvement Plan. Everyone in our region should feel safe and be safe. Our efforts will identify and be focused on targeted intervention and prevention, working towards resilient, respected and safe communities.

Nobody should have to suffer antisocial behaviour. It has been long recognised that prevention is better than cure and in Dumfries and Galloway we embrace the principles of partnership working and aim to focus efforts and resources on intervention and resolution at an early stage. Doing so reduces the potential for escalation and conflict, builds confidence in local processes, and reduces the duplication of effort associated with failure demand.

Furthermore, we recognise that there are opportunities to make communities more resilient through local empowerment and engagement. Attitudes and perceptions can affect feelings of safety and in that regard, it is important to involve and empower our public to enhance the vibrancy and wellbeing of communities.

This strategy sets out how the Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group will build on multi-agency working to tackle antisocial behaviour and its causes, and continue to make the best possible use of all partners' expertise and resources. The strategy will ensure that the needs of those impacted by antisocial behaviour are central to the delivery of services.

Whilst the strategy sets out our objectives until 2028, the aligned work plan is intended to identify and detail the actions the partnership will commit to undertake on a year by year basis to deliver the strategic objectives. It is accepted that local priorities and concerns will be influenced by changing environments and trends, and a yearly review and publication of a forward-looking work plan will reflect this.

National Context

Delivering a Safer and Stronger Scotland is a strategic objective of the Scottish Government to help communities to flourish, become stronger and safer places to live, offer improved opportunities and a better quality of life. It is this which provides the national context for all our community safety activity.

The Scottish Government monitor progress toward their overall purpose and vision for Scotland through the National Performance Framework which sets the targets for local community planning, aimed at making Scotland more successful, giving opportunities, increasing wellbeing, creating sustainable and inclusive growth, reducing inequalities and giving equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress. Designing a strategy for antisocial behaviour can impact upon all of these areas but most significantly upon making communities safer and stronger.

The National Performance Framework sets out a vision for Scotland and Aims to achieve 'a more successful country, with opportunities for all to flourish, through sustainable and inclusive growth'. The framework is underpinned by 11 national outcomes which describe the Scotland the framework aims to create. Anti social behaviour can impact upon many outcomes but most significantly upon the national performance Framework outcome:

We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.

The Scottish Government Building Safer Communities partnership programme provides further support and direction to help communities become safer, more resilient, and which:

- addresses underlying causes of crime (and indeed antisocial behaviour)
- helps people to build strong and positive relationships within communities
- reduces opportunity for offending through diversionary activity and bespoke interventions.

The financial pressure on all public services also highlights the need for more cohesive working practices by all involved in this area of work, to improve community safety and wellbeing.

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Local Context

Dumfries and Galloway is the third largest region in Scotland with an area of **6,426km²**



There are **70,000** households in our region



Our largest settlements are





Stranraer 13,000	Dumfries 48,000	Annan 9,080
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Our population numbers are forecast to decline



2021 148,790	2028 144,575	Change -2.83%
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 26.3% of the population are 65 and over	 24.1% of the population are 24 and under	 The average age of the population is 46 years old <small>(UK 40, Scotland 42)</small>
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Antisocial Behaviour in Dumfries and Galloway

The Dumfries and Galloway Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group has agreed a list of behaviours that could best describe antisocial behaviour. This list largely coincides with the behaviours listed in the 2022 Scottish Household Survey and remains flexible. The prevalence of these behaviours varies in different areas of the region.

The Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group employ a range of techniques to profile the nature of antisocial behaviour as it occurs across the region. We share information in accordance with legal frameworks to understand the nature of local problems, assess risk, and direct resources where they are needed most.

The Dumfries and Galloway Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2023-2033 provides a framework between the Scottish Government and Community Planning Partnerships about how each will work towards improving outcomes for local people, in a way that reflects local circumstances and priorities.

- Noisy Neighbours
- Vandalism and Property Damage
- Litter and Fly tipping
- Neighbour Disputes
- Intimidation and Harassment
- Substance Misuse and Dealing
- Rowdy Behaviour
- Deliberate Fire-setting
- Animal Nuisance

The LOIP identifies the priorities and ambitions we want to achieve for the people of our region. Individual organisations will use this plan to direct and inform their work and use of resources so that we achieve our vision together. The outcomes within this plan are:

Our Outcomes

Theme 1 – Health and Wellbeing

Help mitigate the impacts of the Cost of Living for those who are affected most	Reduce health inequalities in the areas of our region which experience the greatest negative impacts	Improve the health and wellbeing of our citizens through targeted approaches	Work together as partners to eliminate child poverty
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Theme 2 - Work

Grow and maximise the potential of the working age population to help increase employability	Address the skills and recruitment gaps in key sector specific posts to increase capacity, capabilities and ease workforce pressures	Increase volunteering opportunities to help develop skills, build capacity and support progression into local employability	Work with our local communities to develop an inclusive, thriving economy and to promote Fair Work
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Theme 3 – Where We Live

Capitalise on opportunities to collaborate digitally and eliminate digital exclusion	Improve transport connectivity across our region to increase opportunities to access employment, education and leisure, particularly in our most rural areas	Work with our communities to help reduce carbon emissions and positively combat Climate Change through education, behavioural change and supporting initiatives which will make a positive difference	Develop high quality, affordable homes to help meet identified demand and improve the quality of lives of our communities
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A Community Planning action plan will be developed through partners and which will focus on a small number of key actions and the “added value” that can be achieved through Community Planning Partners working closer together and prioritising resources. These actions will be changeable over the lifetime of the Plan and driven by the Community Planning Senior Leadership Team

The Anti Social Behaviour Strategy supports the principle within the Local Outcome Improvement plan of supporting our communities to thrive and early intervention and prevention.

It also directly supports:

Outcome 3 - Improve the health and wellbeing of our citizens through targeted approaches and the area specific locality plans.

There are many other key strategies and plans which contribute to minimising ASB related activities and behaviours and these are attached in **Appendix 3**.

Local Governance and Delivery

Oversight of strategic partnership activity in Dumfries and Galloway is ultimately provided by the Community Planning Partnership Board which brings together representatives from the third, public and private sectors.



Dumfries and Galloway Safer Communities Partnership's remit is to provide oversight to the work of the Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group, who are responsible for maintaining progress against this Strategy's delivery and making recommendations on tactical and operational issues to tackle antisocial behaviour.

Currently, operational activity is co-ordinated at a local level through Community Safety multi-agency Tasking and Co-ordinating (MATAC) meetings held regularly across the region on a locality basis. These meetings formalise local partnership arrangements and adopt a problem-solving approach to consider the most problematic cases. The meetings ensure shared situational awareness, share and maximise use of finite resource, and ensure accountability and progress toward improved outcomes for people and communities affected by antisocial behaviour.

To help improve early intervention and proportionate prevention activity, the ASB Strategy Group will work towards a review of the current process considering the introduction of a new tactical level oversight group that will meet to identify any emerging anti-social behaviour patterns and trends across the region. In addition, to help improve outcomes for people and communities, a review of the existing locality based MATACs will be made with further consideration of a transition to Active Case Management Panels with an improved referral pathway, better governance arrangements and consent based approach to offering collective support.

Our Strategic Approach

The key principle to tackling antisocial behaviour is to have a clear understanding of the nature, frequency, location and complexity of the issue.

An important means of identifying the threat posed to safe and secure communities by antisocial behaviour is through ongoing analysis and assessment.

From a range of data held by partner agencies we are able to identify the problems of most concern, where and when they occur, and the sectors of our communities most affected. In this way, we are able to understand problems, prioritise responses and make joint recommendations as to how best resolve them. Our year on year activities are articulated in our Work Plan.

Consultation and engagement

The views of our communities, partners and stakeholders are canvassed through a region-wide Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Survey and have been used to review and inform the Work Plan. This also includes relevant evidence from the 10,000 Voices young people's engagement exercise published in 2023. This survey saw 10,828 young people between 10 and 25 years old participating in the research, 51.7% of the youth population in Dumfries and Galloway.

In 2023 the average score from the survey for our area against the statement 'I feel safe here', was 4.5, a decrease from the previous 2018 survey results which was 5.25.

The full report for the 2023 findings can be viewed [here](#).

The assessment and referral processes used in Dumfries and Galloway are a proven method of identifying threats, assessing risks, encouraging prioritisation of tasks and appropriate resource allocation.

Information and views are also gathered through local partnerships, feedback from Elected Members, Community Councils, schools and partner organisations, as well as from individuals, citizens and voluntary groups.

Key indicator

Results from the 2023 Community Safety Survey indicated that 85% of local people felt safe in their neighbourhood, a reduction of 5% from 2018. It is known that other factors not necessary associated with ASB can affect how safe people feel. One such factor is the public health implications to individuals and communities relative to the effects of the COVID19 Pandemic and cost of living crisis, which are the key emerging issues in terms of impacts on communities going forward.

As was indicated in the previous strategy document, post pandemic surveys, consultations and engagements need to take account of the affect of the worldwide pandemic and corresponding effects.



Partnership working

Collaboration is at the heart of our approach to tackling antisocial behaviour and partner organisations involved agree that in order to deliver this strategy they must be flexible and maintain effective working relationships. This is especially important going forward to maximise the use of limited resources and specialist expertise to respond to changing community profiles and behavioural trends. Membership of the ASB Strategy Group is detailed in Appendix 2.

As a partnership, we will share current and relevant information in accordance with legal frameworks in order to both prevent and respond to antisocial behaviour.

Within Dumfries and Galloway a remedy based approach has been developed to tackle antisocial behaviour involving a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies.

Prioritisation

It is recognised that there are many challenges facing partners and therefore it is necessary to prioritise our activity. Our most vulnerable people and communities will continue to be our focus.

We must act in partnership and strive to be flexible and creative in our response to ASB in order to ensure Dumfries and Galloway is, and continues to be one of the safest place in Scotland to live, work and visit.

Community Justice

Community Justice cannot be viewed or addressed in isolation and therefore it is vital that partnership plans which contribute to Community Justice are aligned. We know that many things can impact on the way people behave and on their communities including education (schools and further education), employment services, jobs and employers including emergency services; health, income, housing and lots of third sector/voluntary organisations but the most important thing that influences people are their families and the communities within which they live.

The justice system is very complicated, with different options available at each stage of the journey. There are many decisions to be made from the point of arrest to the decision to charge, whether to proceed to court or divert and what type of sentence to give. Yet there are many things we as communities can and could do before people even get to the stage of formal involvement in the system. Strong, connected communities working together can have a much greater effect on the lives of people than services alone ever could.

We know that many incidents of violent crime in Scotland is committed whilst under the influence of alcohol therefore close alignment with the Alcohol and Drug Partnership is important; whilst women involved in the justice system have high levels of trauma and incidences of abuse; linking closely to the work of the local Domestic Abuse Violence Against Women Partnership and the Public Protection Partnership for Dumfries and Galloway.

We recognise that integration/reintegration is vitally important for those involved in the justice system, with the desistance journey having many parallels with the recovery from addiction journey. We continue to support and promote diversion at the front end of the system and throughcare at the back end to achieve the best outcomes for individuals through rehabilitation, families and our communities. This also means recognising the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences on many of those involved and the impact of this on their future outcomes in life. Early intervention, prevention and diversionary activities have a huge part to play in this.

Strategic Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to proactively tackle antisocial behaviour to keep our communities safe and ensure our public feel safe.

Secondary to the reassurance afforded by a sense of wellbeing and feeling safe, by promoting positive citizenship and building resilience within communities, we aim to effectively prevent, tackle and reduce antisocial behaviour throughout Dumfries and Galloway.

The Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Group has devised and endorsed an approach which embraces the following three key themes and with communication integral to each theme:

	Objective	Outcome	Communication
1	Prevention and Early Intervention We will focus on a preventative approach and tackle causes of antisocial behaviour through early intervention	Reduced antisocial behaviour and reduced victimisation	
2	Community Engagement We will engage communities in our work to understand and address the issues affecting local people, and encourage people to lead engaged lifestyles within their local communities	Improved awareness of community needs and increased involvement of communities to address local issues	
3	Enforcement When other interventions have failed or are deemed inappropriate, we will work together to use legislation to deal with persistent offenders	Address persistent offenders and problematic premises or locations	

We aim to achieve this antisocial behaviour strategy by:

- Securing the aims of this partner agency commitment and community engagement in tackling antisocial behaviour at source, identifying the causes, and introducing effective interventions at the earliest possible stage.
- Establishing mechanisms to identify and prioritise antisocial behaviour, by type, by frequency and by area; taking cognisance of vulnerability and deploying resources where they are needed most.
- Determining strategic actions supported by locally-based Community Safety Multi Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Groups (MATAC's), which can tailor local solutions to localised problems.
- Continuing to develop our policies, protocols and procedures to address antisocial behaviour across the region.

Our aim: 'to proactively tackle antisocial behaviour to keep communities safe and ensure our public feel safe'

Prevention and Early Intervention

- Visibility & community safety
- Participatory learning
- Effective policy & procedure
- Environmental responsibility

Community Engagement

- Formal engagement
- Public events
- Education programmes
- Diversion

Enforcement

- Effective policy & procedure
- Informal remedies
- Use of legislation

Principles

- Collaboration
- Flexibility
- Risk prioritisation
- Communication





Measuring Outcomes

In line with the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan for the region, this Antisocial Behaviour Strategy is firmly committed to an outcome-based approach to planning, delivering and monitoring performance. A Work Plan is aligned to the strategy which details the actions we will take to improve local outcomes. This is our commitment to our local public and stakeholders as to the manner in which we will work together and act to tackle antisocial behaviour.

The Work Plan is a live document which is reviewed annually, to enable partners to tailor services to respond to changing and emerging threats, trends, legislation or society; the overarching aim being to resolve antisocial behaviour as early as possible, using enforcement measures where preventative interventions have failed.

To support this, a number of indicators have been identified which will help evaluate progress over the longer term.

The outcomes which will be used to monitor the success of this strategy, and which are all underpinned by effective communication, are:

	Aim	Measures	Communication
Strategic aim	That members of the public and our communities feel safe	Percentage of residents who feel safe in their neighbourhood	
Prevention and Early Intervention	Demonstrate a clear commitment to preventing ASB, through pre-emptive actions and coordination. Improve our response at an early stage, to effectively reduce number of repeat ASB victims	ASB related complaints Number of repeat victims of ASB Proactive education work undertaken to help improve understanding and awareness of ASB issues and influence positive changes in behaviours Effectiveness of patrolling work undertaken	
Community Engagement	That we have an improved awareness and understanding of community needs and are flexible and responsive to react to emerging issues	The ways we gather information on the extent and effects of ASB Analysis and use of, the information gathered to help inform our approaches and response	
Enforcement	That legislation has been utilised effectively and appropriately to deal with persistent offenders	The number of enforcement measures taken by individual agencies to help reduce the number of complaints from the public The number of cases being escalated to multi agency approach through MATACs	



Data Statement

Tackling antisocial behaviour is increasingly a major part of the work of a wide range of agencies and groups - local authorities, police, registered social landlords, voluntary organisations, and parts of the private sector.

The Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 is intended to help deal with antisocial behaviour more effectively and contains a range of provisions in the areas of justice, the environment, housing and child welfare, all of which are linked to tackling antisocial behaviour. The Act affords powers to facilitate the exchange of information to tackle antisocial behaviour and can be accessed at www.hmsso.gov.uk.

Our local partnerships work in accordance with an agreed Information Sharing Protocol. The scope of this protocol is to clarify as far as is possible, the circumstances under which information can be exchanged. A single, joint approach to exchanging information is a highly efficient mechanism for reducing crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour.

We will disclose personal data relating to a perpetrator, alleged perpetrator, victim, informant or witness with the consent of the data subject. We will also disclose information without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so and also an overriding public interest in disclosure. (There must be a lawful basis, such as a "public task" and then a requirement to weigh up the public interest in disclosure. It is a two stage approach)

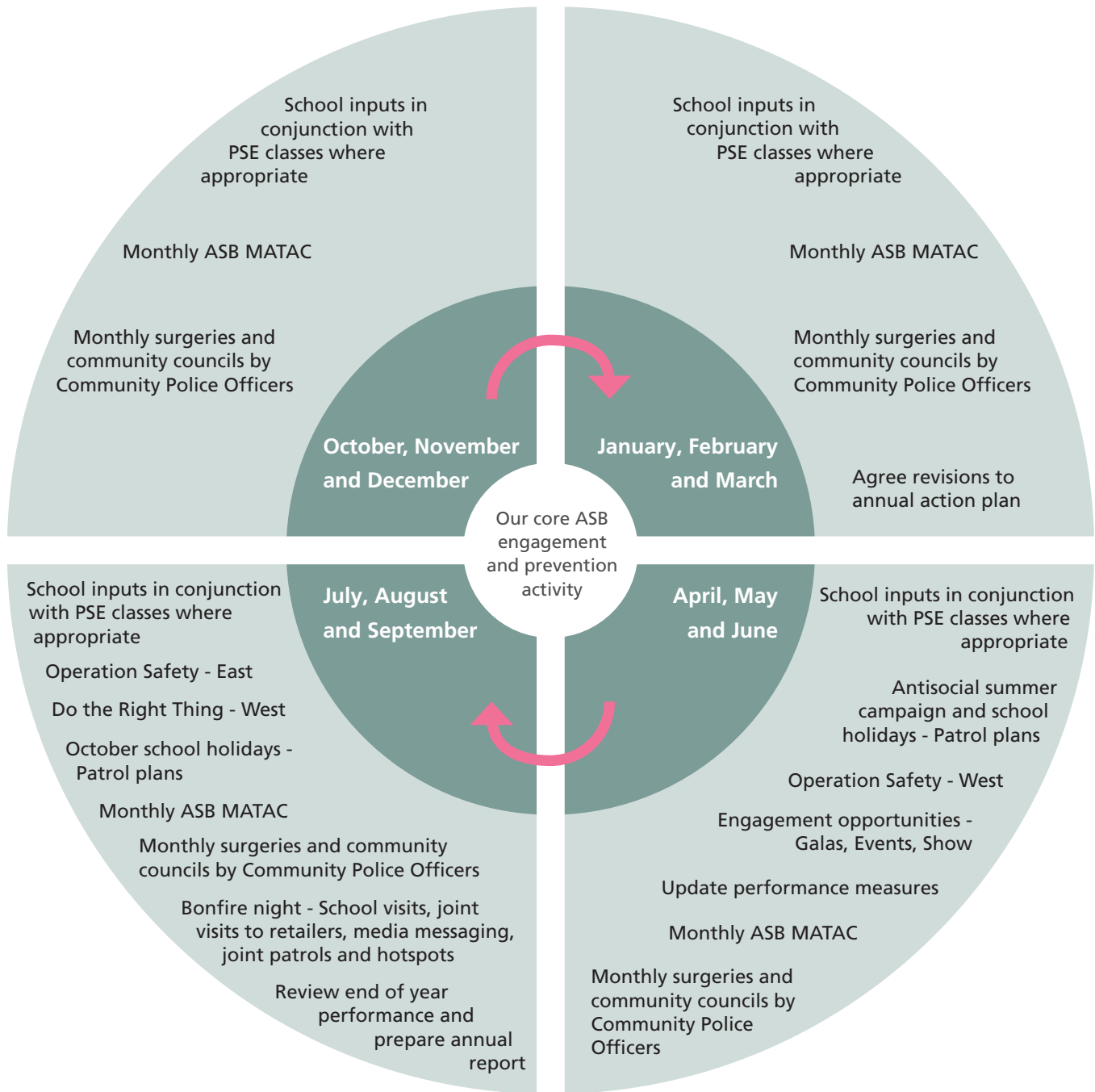
Effective management of antisocial behaviour requires effective sharing of information amongst partners. Scottish Ministers have indicated that unnecessary obstacles to the sharing of that information should be eliminated.

For further information regarding our Information Sharing Protocol, please contact Lucy Irons-Young, Dumfries and Galloway Council Legal Services, Council Offices, English Street, Dumfries. Lucy.Irons-Young@dumgal.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Dumfries and Galloway Antisocial Behaviour Strategy

Our 2024 - 2028 Action Plan Calendar



Appendix 2

ASB Multi-Agency Arrangements

ASB Strategy Group



Area based Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-Ordination Groups (MATACs)

Area based groups consisting of locally based officers from the organisations/agencies represented on the Strategic Group



Proposed new ASB Multi-Agency Arrangements (for adoption during 2024)

Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy Group
(quarterly meetings to monitor collective performance in relation to annual workplan)

Patterns and Trends - Tactical Oversight Group
(regionwide monthly meetings to identify opportunities for early locally based or thematic interventions)

Active Case Management Panel Meetings
(personalised meetings for partner agencies to offer collective support)

Appendix 3

Links to regional plans and strategies



**If you would like help understanding this or need it in
another format telephone 030 33 33 3000**