

Anti-social behaviour interventions with young people

Adam Crawford, Sam Lewis & Peter Traynor,
University of Leeds

‘Responding to Anti-Social Behaviour’

Insights from Research for Policy and Practice

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Our aims:



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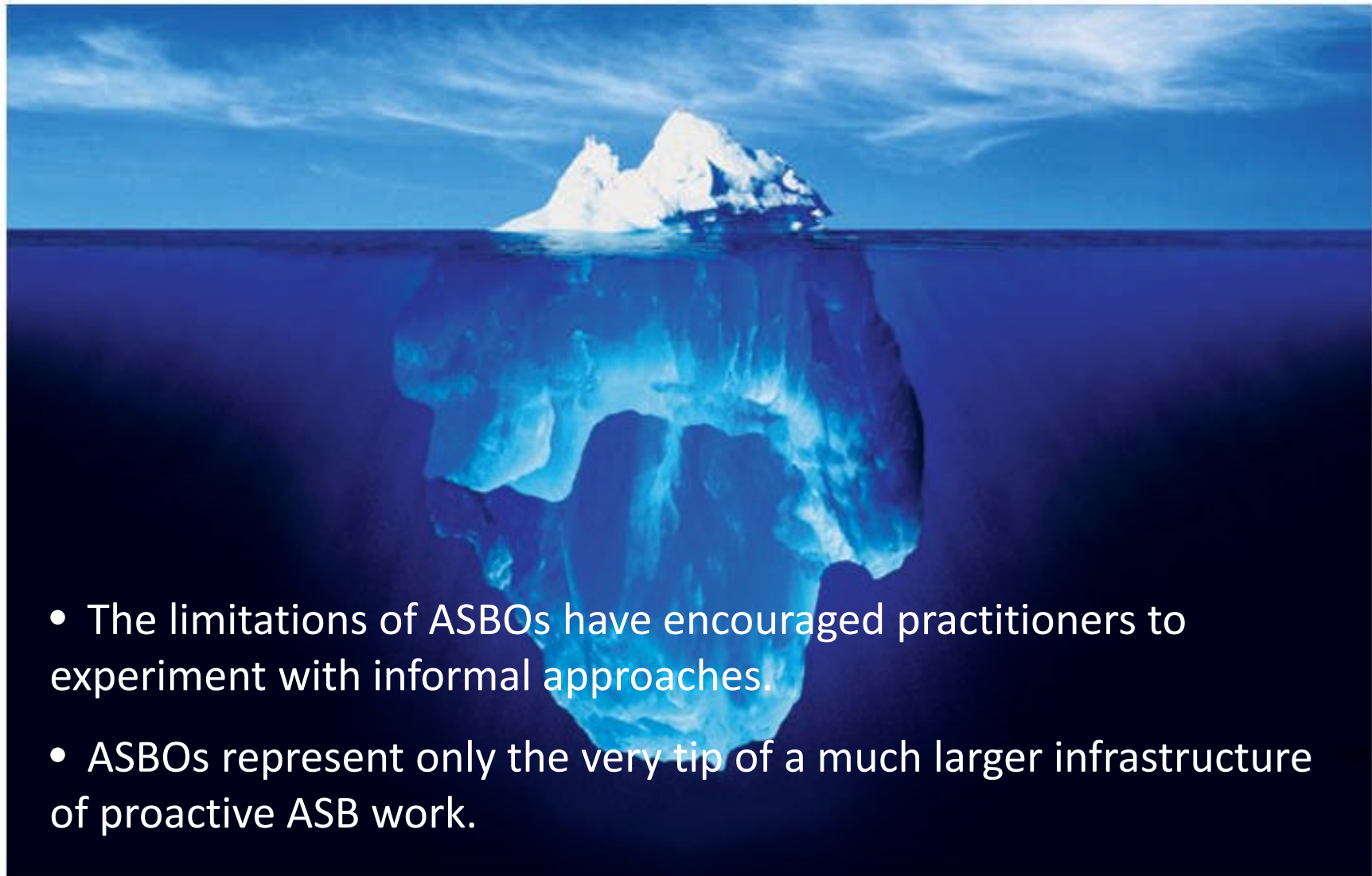
- To draw together some of the key findings and insights from the Nuffield Foundation research into Anti-Social Behaviour Interventions with young people, their use and impact.
- To highlight the implications of the research for the policy proposals outlined in the Government's White paper(s).



The tip of the iceberg



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- The limitations of ASBOs have encouraged practitioners to experiment with informal approaches.
- ASBOs represent only the very tip of a much larger infrastructure of proactive ASB work.

Nuffield Foundation Project



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The study combined:

1. Collection and analysis of quantitative data, from police, council, youth offending services and social housing providers;
2. Interviews with young people, parents and practitioners (over 120);
3. Focus groups with front-line staff from housing, police, council and youth offending services (total 18).

The research team collected data on:

- the use of ASB interventions with all young people given a formal warning, ABC or ASBO (1 April 2008 - 31 March 2010);
- the use of prevention services and youth justice interventions.

Sought to track young peoples' pathways back over time and 12 months after their intervention.

The study was undertaken in four large, metropolitan Community Safety Partnership areas with diverse multi-ethnic populations.

Key Findings



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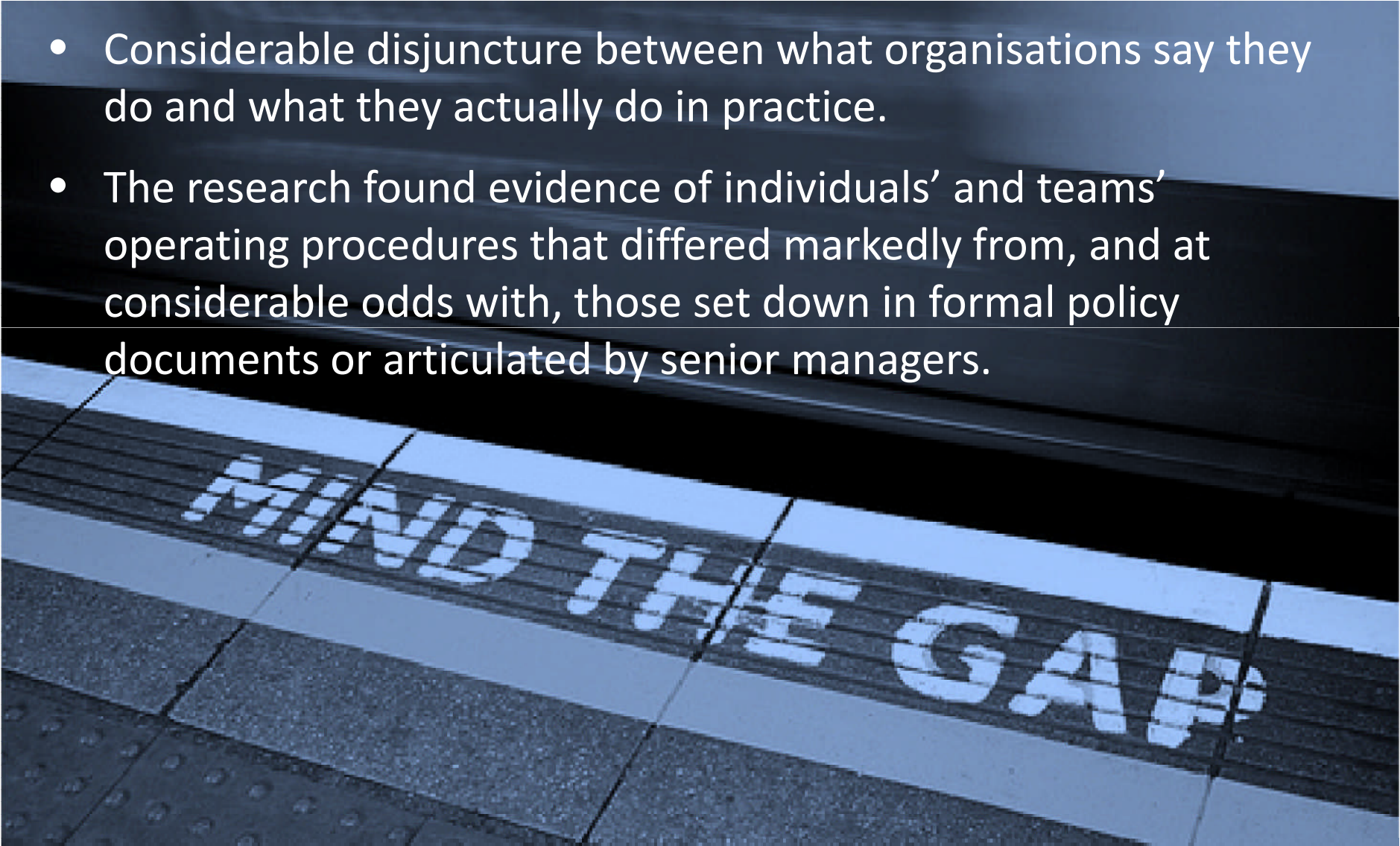
- Local Partnership Working
- Young People's Views
- Parents' Views
- Pathways
- Data Issues
- The Role of Housing Tenure
- Implications for Future Directions in Policy

Mind the Gap



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- Considerable disjuncture between what organisations say they do and what they actually do in practice.
- The research found evidence of individuals' and teams' operating procedures that differed markedly from, and at considerable odds with, those set down in formal policy documents or articulated by senior managers.

A photograph of a train platform with the words "MIND THE GAP" painted in large, white, block letters on the edge of the platform. The platform is made of dark, textured paving stones. In the background, a train is visible, and the scene is slightly blurred, suggesting motion or a shallow depth of field.

MIND THE GAP



Widespread and considerable variations in ASB policies and use of tools - *within* and *between* CSP areas.

Influenced by:

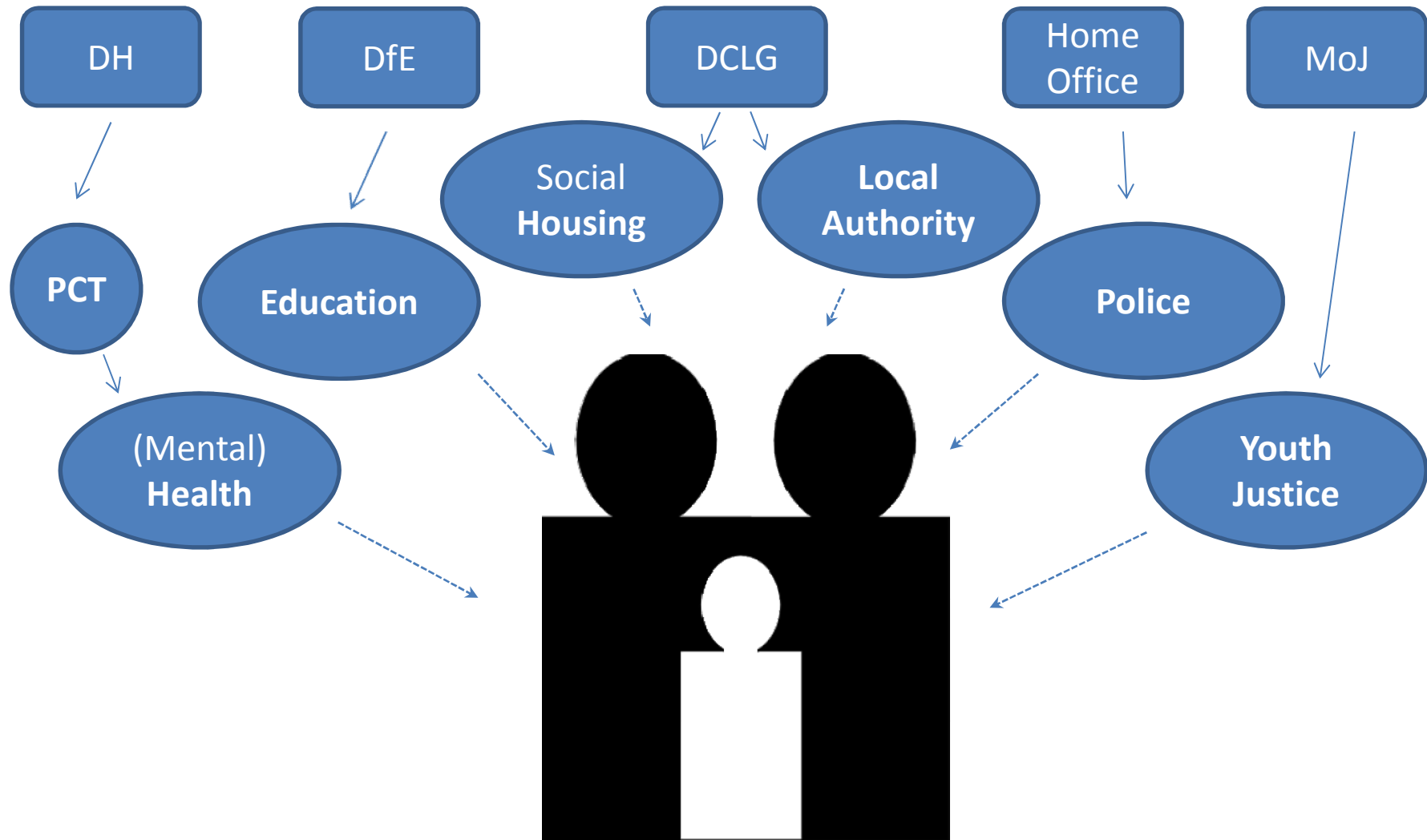
- local preferences for particular approaches,
- the nature of partnership relations,
- the willingness of key individuals to innovate and
- the availability of local support services.

The availability of suitable support services is uneven and geographically contingent.

Complex Organisational Matrix



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Models of Delivery



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	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
Lead Agency	Family Intervention and YOS	ASB Team	ASB Team	Housing supported by Police
Single Referral Point	Yes: single internal co-ordinator	No: ASB team provide advice + coordination	Yes	No: dual housing/ police
Centralised/Devolved Police organisation	Central ASB officers	Neighbourhood Teams	Neighbourhood Teams	Central ASB officers
YOS Involvement	Yes: in some parts	Yes: but fractious	Limited but generally good relations	Yes
Social Housing Input	Yes: main referral point to coordinator	Yes: large RSL's very engaged	Limited: hard to engage RSLs	Yes: Housing lead agency

Volume of ASB Interventions by Gender (2008-10)



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Research Site	Male (N)	Male as % of total*	Female (N)	Female as % of total*	Total (N)**	Mid 2007 population estimates (000s)	No. per 100,000 of total population
Site A	332	83.8	64	16.2	409	231.9	176
Site B	87	84.5	16	15.5	104	187.8	55
Site C	431	81.8	96	18.2	556	761.1	73
Site D	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,418	530.3	456

No simple correspondence between volume of ASB work and population size.

No straightforward relationship between levels of deprivation and the number of young people in receipt of ASB interventions

Volume of Different Interventions



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	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
Volume YP with ASBO No. (per 100,00)	11 (4.7)	4 (2.1)	48 (6.3)	17 (3.21)
Volume YP with ABC No. (per 100,00)	67 (28.9)	102 (54.3)	242 (31.8)	307 (57.9)
Volume YP with ASB Warning No. (per 100,00)	Not Available	0	351 (46.1)*	2,301 (433.9)*
Typical behaviour for ASB intervention	Criminal	Nuisance/ criminal	Nuisance/ criminal	Nuisance

* Some missing data

Young people's views



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Where ABCs were perceived to be most effective their implementation conformed to a number of criteria:

- They were issued in a fair, respectful and proportionate manner in which the young person felt that they had their say and were listened to;
- The terms and implications were carefully explained, as offering an opportunity for the young person to address and change their behaviour;
- They provided the young person with 'escape routes' and 'turning points', as well as opportunities to avoid situations and people that might provoke behavioural difficulties, and/or access to resources that might help them address their behaviour and associated problems.

By contrast,



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ABCs worked less well:

- where it was not clear how the agreement related to whatever the young person had done;
- where there was uncertainty as to what the intervention entailed; its terms and length;
- where 'catch-all' terms – such as prohibitions against committing any future 'anti-social behaviour' – were used which could be seen as unjust and unreasonable because it was felt difficult to predict what their breach might entail;
- where the terms were overly punitive;
- without support; and
- lacking procedural justice.

Parents' views



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Parents' views about the manner in which they were treated by ASB professionals and their experiences of procedural and substantive justice, shaped their willingness to cooperate.

Engaging with the young person and parents was crucial to fostering their cooperation and compliance.

For some parents perceptions of injustice prompted a defensive response and/or antagonistic relations with authorities.

Uncooperative relations were also fostered amongst parents who perceived the response to be disproportionate to the events that triggered it.

Threats of eviction in relation to their child's (apparent) behaviour were experienced by many parents as unfair and disproportionate.

Parents' views (cooperation)



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Parental cooperation is vital to effective change.

Cooperation is likely where parents are supported and seen as key enablers in behavioural change/compliance.

Many parents were keen for assistance, welcomed appropriate opportunities to access resources and frequently expressed frustrations at the erstwhile lack of support available to them.

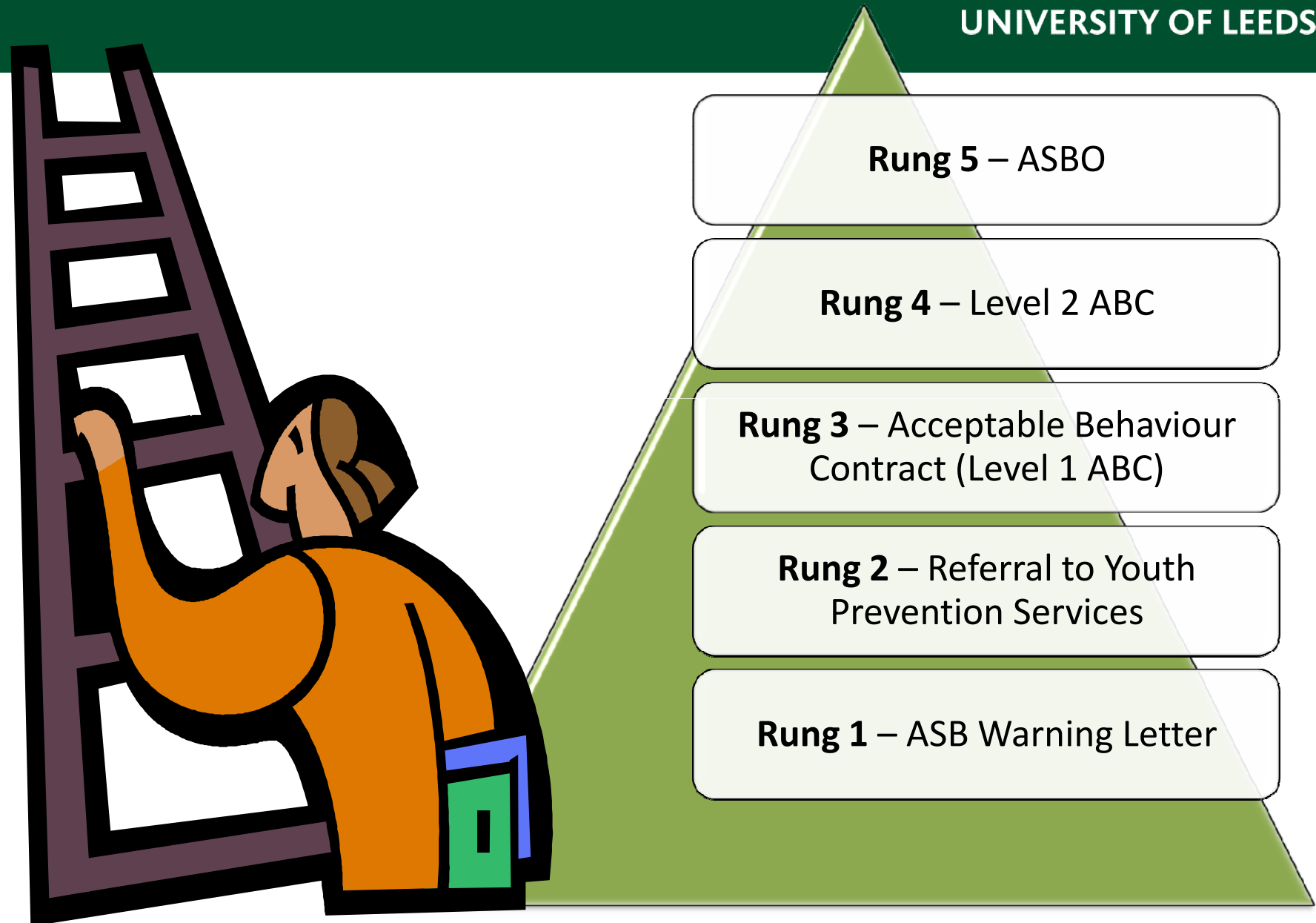
Cooperation is likely to be forthcoming where it is accompanied by experiences of procedural justice – being treated with respect, provided with evidence and being given a voice and listened to – and perceptions of fairness in dealings with authorities.

- Some young people had received (multiple) youth justice sanctions before being given an ASB intervention – even at the lowest level.
- For others, ASB interventions were the first formal contact with legal authorities (outside of school).
- ASB interventions constitute simultaneously possible pathways into, and away from, youth justice.
- Variations between sites in the proportion of young people whose trajectories included the highest level sanction (an ASBO):
 - In Site C, 40 of the 141 young people who received an intervention in the first year of the study had received an ASBO by the end of the follow-up period (28 per cent).
 - In Sites A and B the proportion of young people who received an ASB intervention in year one who attained an ASBO by the end of year two was just four per cent.
- Inconsistencies over the implementation of, and commitment to, a tiered approach to ASB tools or ‘ladder of interventions’, which contribute to young people climbing the ladder at different speeds in different areas.

Ladder of ASB Interventions



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Data should conform to standards of:

- ☐ Accuracy
- ☐ Validity
- ☐ Reliability
- ☐ Timeliness
- ☐ Relevance
- ☐ Completeness

(Audit Commission 2007)

Barriers to information exchange



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‘Confident and effective information exchange is the key to multi-agency working in any sphere – nowhere more so than in statutory partnerships for crime and disorder reduction ... The effectiveness of information exchange arrangements is a reflection of the effectiveness of the partnership as a whole’.

(Home Office 1999: 1)

‘The DPA is still commonly cited as a reason not to release information when it may be perfectly legitimate to do so’.

(Thomas and Walport 2008: 37)

‘Organisations that don’t understand what can and cannot be done legally are as likely to disadvantage their clients through excessive caution as they are by carelessness’.

(ICO 2011: 4)

‘[Practitioners think] “no I can’t share it with you because of the Data Protection Act” ... We’ve been doing some work about getting people to understand that actually it isn’t quite as restrictive as that ...’

Area B: Police Inspector

‘We’ve had some issues around sharing police data and sensitive individual’s data ... we share information very well around the table, there isn’t a sense of people not saying stuff ... but electronically it’s become a little more problematic’.

Area A: Head of Community Safety Services

Multiple databases



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‘All these numerous databases – in excess of 12 I think – are not designed to talk to each other, so you can’t cross check them’.

Area C: Multi-Agency Panel Manager

‘In terms of recording anti-social behaviour, we don’t have one system that does it and we don’t have systems that talk to each other’.

Area D: Practitioner

Robust data matter because they:

- ☐ Allow for joined-up service provision
- ☐ Allow agencies to track individuals and families
- ☐ Provide evidence of effectiveness
- ☐ Ensure the best use of resources

- Many ASB tools are either tenure specific or seen as more effective (and more likely to be used) in relation to those in social housing.
- Threats of eviction not only fall unequally on those most socially disadvantaged by their status in social housing but also tend to impact disproportionately on mothers.
- The research highlights considerable concerns that young people who live in social housing are subject to greater disciplinary regulation and more likely to be drawn into ASB interventions than those living outside this sector.
- This gives rise to concerns about differential experiences of ‘justice by tenure’.



The research highlights the need to:

- Ensure continuity of service provision and tracking of individuals across relevant agencies.
- Think strategically about how different tools and different (prevention, ASB, housing and youth justice) systems of interventions interact, and about the principles that inform their implementation.
- Ensure that appropriate support services are available across areas and adequately funded.
- Improve the quality and comparability of data to inform decision-making and joined-up working.



- Provision of support to change behaviour must be provided.
- Recognition of the role of informal, pre-court interventions.
- The provision that positive as well as negative requirements be introduced in the new CPI and CBO. If well-designed could be helpful and reduce breaches.
- The need to consult a young person about the reasons for their misbehaviour, recognises the importance of engaging with young people and their parents to enlist their cooperation.
- Cooperation has positive benefits for compliance.
- Recognition of the need to consult with youth offending services.

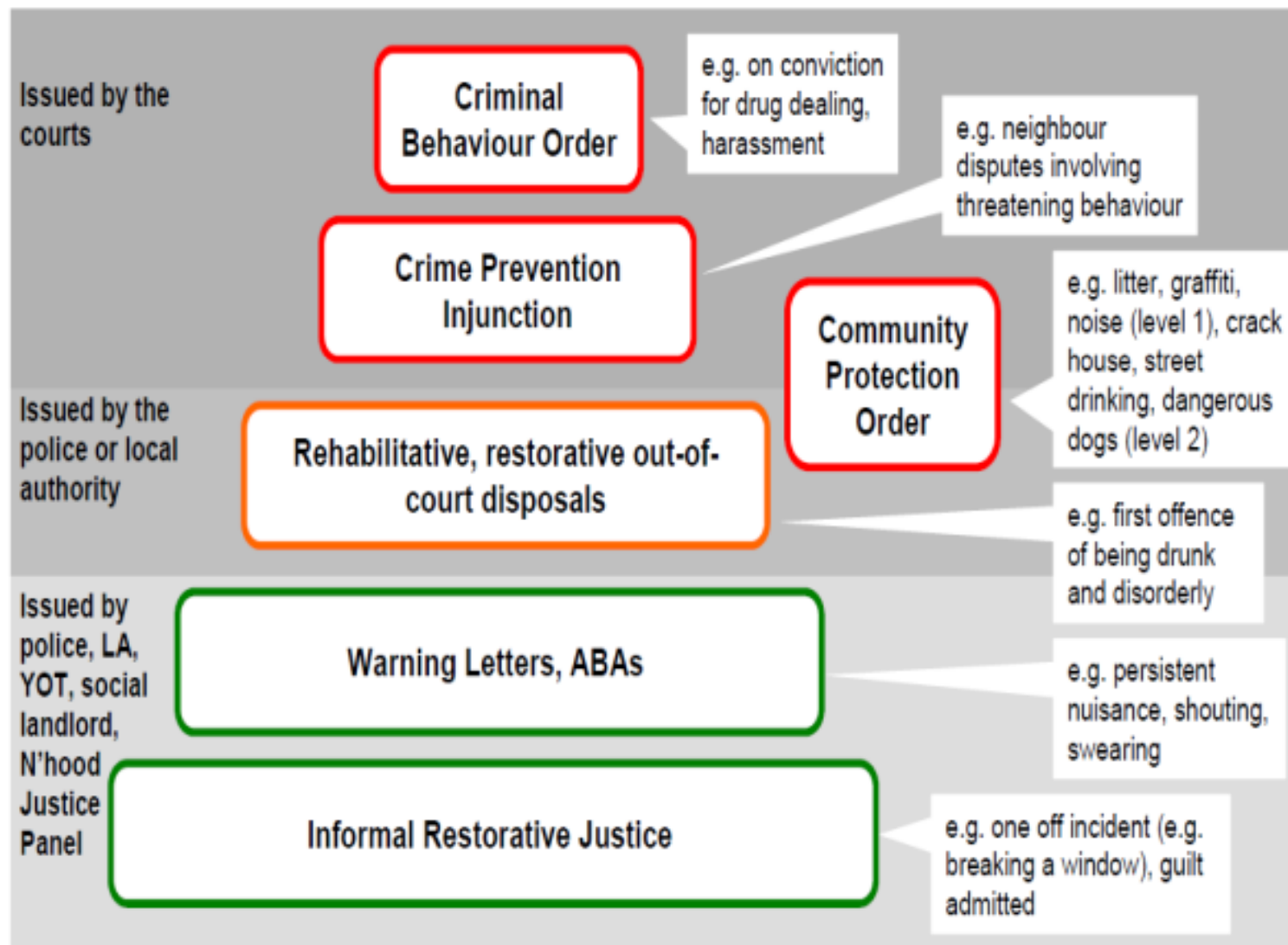


- There are concerns that the Government's 'localism' agenda will serve to exacerbate the quality of data collection, amplify inconsistencies and increase differential practices and experiences of justice ('by geography').
- An opportunity has been missed to take a strategic look at the range of formal and informal ASB interventions and how they interact with the criminal justice system.
- There are dangers that the proposed new crime prevention injunction will lower the threshold for court-based intervention and disrupt existing preventative pre-ASBO work by partner organisations.

Hierarchical 'Ladder' or 'Toolbox'



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In Conclusion



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- There is a fine balance between:
 - not over-burdening young people (and the organisations that work with them) with data collection, monitoring and surveillance demands and
 - not ignoring the benefits that accrue from preventative early intervention work due to the evident challenges of providing robust data collection systems for tracking vulnerable and needy young people in their transitions to adulthood and across diverse service providers.
- If early intervention is to be taken seriously, it requires investments in data collection, management, sharing and use that enhance the capacity to generate the data-sets that enable practitioners to:
 - assess robustly the impacts of their work on young people;
 - track the preventative benefits of early intervention endeavours;
 - join-up service provision and support; and
 - evaluate the effectiveness of different interventions.
- Conversely, it is necessary to acknowledge the risks of labelling and inadvertently drawing youths deeper (and faster) into the criminal justice system that attend to early intervention initiatives.