

Briefing Note

Subject:	Ashington Town Council - Safer Communities Officer (SCO) Funding Post Project Shield (2026–27)
Date:	26 Feb 2026

Executive Summary

This addendum provides a concise overview of Project Shield activity and outcomes specific to Ashington since April 2025. It highlights key performance improvements, partnership activity, and case-based impact delivered by the dedicated Safer Communities Officer (SCO) resource. The summary also sets out the implications of the Hotspot Action Fund ending on 31 March 2026, with detailed evidence and analysis presented in the sections that follow.

Purpose

This briefing provides Ashington-specific performance information relating to Project Shield, supplementing the wider report issued on 31 January 2026. It summarises demonstrable impacts, partnership activity, qualitative case studies, and ongoing risks

Summary of Impact (Ashington Only)

- ASB reduced by 29.52% (840 in 2024 to 592 reports in 2025).
- 1,143 hours of SCO patrol activity delivered during Q1–Q3 2025/26.
- 327.5 hours of additional patrols on transport corridors linked to Ashington.

Partnership Highlights

- Strong collaboration with Triangle Area businesses (McDonalds, ASDA, Home Bargains, Leisure Centre).
- Enhanced CCTV-supported reporting and faster identification of offenders.
- Early intervention reducing repeat offending and reinforcing community reassurance.

Positive Action

- 42 banning letters issued for McDonalds
- 13 banning letters issued for ASDA
- 3 banning letters for the Leisure Centre
- 31 Police ASB warning letters
- 5 S.59 (Police Reform Act 2002) notices
- 125 intelligence submissions
- Multiple child and adult safeguarding referrals

Diversion & Prevention

- 6 YOT Turnaround referrals
- 6 Fire & Rescue “Extinguish” fire-setting intervention sessions
- Youth outreach funded for Beyond Youth and Streetwise projects
- Educational and preventative inputs delivered at:
 - Ashington High School
 - Dukes Academy
 - Ashington College
 - Kirkley Hall College

Case Studies

Case Study 1 - Youth Disorder at Retail Premises: Two boys aged 12 and 10 were responsible for repeated ASB around Station Road, McDonalds and ASDA, including abuse toward staff, fire-setting, riding scooters indoors, and targeting vulnerable volunteers.

Key actions:

- Identified via CCTV and Asset Watch
- Home visits and graded ASB/banning letters
- Safeguarding concerns identified: non-attendance at school, medication non-compliance, domestic risks
- Multi-agency safety and support plan implemented

Outcome:

- Male 1: returned to school, compliant with medication, ASB ceased
- Male 2: ongoing Social Services intervention; no further incidents

Case Study 2 – Support for a Vulnerable Resident: A woman in her 70s experiencing repeated youth disorder was found to be living in extreme vulnerability (12 dogs, 3 cats, a parrot, clutter, malnutrition).

Key actions:

- Immediate Social Services referral; multiple follow-ups
- Fire & Rescue home-safety visit (hearing-impaired equipment fitted)
- Animal Welfare involvement
- Landlord engaged to repair property
- Police implemented a harm-reduction plan
- NCC installed CCTV to deter disorder

Outcome:

- ASB ceased
- Property conditions improved
- Multi-agency wrap-around support in place

Key Risk

The Home Office Hotspot Action Fund ends 31 March 2026. Without alternative funding, the dedicated SCO resource cannot be sustained.

Background Papers and Information

NCC Town & Parish Council Briefing (31 January 2026)

Report Author

Chris Grice, Strategic Community Safety and Partnership Manager