Darwin’s inner suburbs are receiving preferential treatment as Government mounts a rearguard action against anti-social behaviour.

Member for Sanderson, Peter Styles, says the problem of habitual drunks and itinerants is as great in the northern suburbs as it is in the inner suburbs – but the Government only acts when the media brings pressure to bear.

“I receive a constant stream of complaints from business owners and members of the public about anti-social behaviour in the northern suburbs,” Mr Styles said.

Traders regularly report to me issues of itinerants defecating and urinating in public places and on footpaths outside their premises.

This, along with drunken behavior, is deterring and intimidating their customers.

The problem has been entrenched in suburban shopping centres for years and despite the best efforts of our hard-working police force, the Government has failed to provide law enforcement agencies with appropriate tools to tackle this issue.

In 2008, the Country Liberals outlined a plan to force habitual drunks to undergo mandatory rehabilitation and to build a 300 bed prison farm in Katherine to provide rehabilitation services.

The Government should immediately adopt this policy instead of only responding to the issue when it’s raised in the media.

I’m concerned that efforts to remove itinerants from the streets in Parap and Fannie Bay may result in an increase in anti-social behaviour in the northern suburbs.

This is a short term fix that will most likely shift the problem from Fannie Bay and Parap to other suburbs.”

Mr Styles said Labor has had 10 years to get on top of anti-social behaviour.

“I welcome calls by Independent Member, Gerry Wood, to support mandatory rehabilitation,” he said.

“Hopefully we can work together in the Northern Territory Parliament to get the Government to respond to the community’s concerns.”

Further comment: Peter Styles 0411 640 660