

Antisocial Behaviour



Antisocial behaviour

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) is defined as any behaviour that causes harassment, alarm or distress to any person not of the same household.

We all experience things in our lives that we don't like that makes us upset, but the main issue is how reasonable a persons behaviour is, how often it occurs and what affect it's having on other people and their community. It should not however include a minor one off act but a series of acts that have become a nuisance. In some cases the behaviour could also be criminal.

Examples of what it is:

- Harassment
- Vehicle nuisance and off-road driving
- Verbal abuse (verbal abuse of a racial or homophobic nature should be reported to the police)
- Begging
- Uncontrolled pets or animals
- Criminal damage (including graffiti, vandalism and littering)
- Noise nuisance (unnecessary volumes of noise especially at antisocial times)
- Riding or cycling on pavements
- Fly-tipping and misuse of communal areas
- Engaging in threatening behaviour in large groups
- Smoking or drinking while under age
- Drug or alcohol misuse particularly in public
- Intimidating behaviour
- Drunkenness and loutish behaviour
- Littering

Examples of what it isn't:

- Children playing in the park
- Ball games
- Parking issues on a public highway
- Gatherings of people
- People not being able to park their vehicle in their preferred space

What to do

Remain calm and do not retaliate. If you feel comfortable try speaking to the person responsible for the behaviour. If not, you can contact the Police, by telephoning 101, or the Community Safety Department at your local Council. We may not always be able to completely resolve your issue but we will always treat the issue seriously and take what action we can.

Consider keeping a diary of the behaviour including times, dates and what has happened. In some circumstances you may need to be prepared to attend court and give evidence.

Other sources

Citizens Advice Bureau

03444 111 306

Housing Association

If you or the alleged perpetrator are housing association tenants, it is worth talking to them first as they will have in house processes to deal with such things.



How we deal with antisocial behaviour

We will always use all the appropriate interventions to deal with an issue or person before taking enforcement action, this can include referring people to specialist services or community projects. Entering people into the criminal justice system is always a last resort, for which evidence is needed.

Warning letters

If a person is witnessed committing an act of antisocial behaviour, they may receive a warning letter from our ASB team. This will highlight what they have done and explain further action will be taken if their behaviour continues. Depending on the severity of the offence, a person may receive up to three warning letters before their case is escalated. A team of specialists will discuss the individual including what necessary support, interventions and enforcement action is necessary for their behaviour to change.

Acceptable Behaviour Contract

An Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) is a voluntary contract between the perpetrator of the antisocial behaviour, the council and other agencies. These contracts enable conditions to be placed upon an individual restricting their behaviour. While the signing of an ABC is voluntary, a breach or refusal to engage could give supporting evidence towards more formal sanctions through the courts. While putting conditions on the individual we also try and support them by making appropriate referrals to specialist agencies and community organisations.

Antisocial behaviour tools and powers

Safer North Hampshire have a range of other tools and powers to deal with antisocial behaviour, including Civil Injunctions (a civil power to set a standard of behaviour), Criminal Behaviour Orders (a court order to tackle ASB following a conviction for a criminal offence), Dispersal powers (the power to remove a person from a location for up to 48 hours) and Public Spaces Protection Orders (an order to protect a place from persistently antisocial individuals or groups).

These often require a high burden of proof to obtain, so it is important that individuals who are victims of ASB report incidents using the appropriate channels. If some of the above are breached, it can lead to further enforcement action which could include community service or a prison sentence.

Other common issues

Fly-tipping

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of waste onto public land. As well as an environmental issue, it also creates issues around safety and peoples perceptions of the area.

The local authority will prosecute anyone caught fly-tipping which carries a fine of up to £20,000 any even a prison sentence. We can use covert CCTV cameras to monitor fly-tipping hotspots to catch fly-tippers if an area becomes a regular problem.

Dumping green waste on any public space, woodland or common land is also classed as fly-tipping. Fly-tipping on private land is the responsibility of the landowner to clear. **To report fly-tipping on public land contact your Local Authority's waste team.**





Graffiti

Graffiti is considered antisocial and criminal damage. It is the vandalism and defacement of someone else's property, it can lead to an area feeling uncared for – increasing people's fear of crime and encouraging other acts of ASB. Graffiti is expensive to remove and depending on where it is, may require specialists to remove. If the graffiti is on public property, you should report this to your local council. Graffiti on private property is the responsibility of the landowner to remove though the council may be able to assist or signpost with this. **To report graffiti on public property contact your Local Authority's customer service team.**

Dangerous dogs

A dog is defined as dangerously out of control if it injures a person or it behaves in a way that makes a person worried that it might injure them. The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 prohibits the ownership, breeding, sale and exchange and advertising for sale of specified types of fighting dogs. The law can be enforced either by the local council or Police, with penalties including a substantial fine and/or imprisonment. Residents are asked to be vigilant, and should they own, or know of a dog or dogs that they suspect are illegal they should contact their local council. **To report dangerous dogs contact your Local Authority's dog warden service or the Police non-emergency number 101.**

Parking

Parking issues are often reported as ASB where no offence has been committed. If there are no parking restrictions in place and a vehicle is taxed and insured, it can remain indefinitely. People often believe they have a priority right to park outside their own property or may feel annoyed about other vehicles on their road, but we all have the right to park our vehicles. Your local parking enforcement team will be able to provide further information if you are unsure if an offence has taken place.

To report parking issues contact your Local Authority's parking team.



Noise

We should all expect a degree of noise from outside our homes, particularly if we live in apartments or terraced properties. The first step should be to politely speak to your neighbours and explain the situation. If you live in rented accommodation from a housing association or landlord you could discuss your concerns with them. If these steps don't resolve the issue – you can contact your local authorities environmental health team to discuss further. **To report noise concerns contact your Local Authority's environmental health team.**

In an emergency or if you witness a crime taking place, always call 999.

For non-emergencies, please call 101.

Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111

Neighbourhood Watch

Find out about joining an existing Neighbourhood Watch scheme or start one in your area, by contacting the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator on 101.

Contact your local community safety team:

Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council 01252 844844

Hart District Council 01252 622122

Rushmoor Borough Council 01252 398399

Web - www.safernh.co.uk **Follow us on Twitter** - @safernorthhants

Email - CommunitySafetyTeam@communitysafetynh.org

Subscribe to our monthly newsletter by contacting us on the above email address



*Basingstoke
and Deane*



RUSHMOOR
BOROUGH COUNCIL