

TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

This leaflet explains where you can go for help to tackle anti-social behaviour and how you can help solve anti-social behaviour problems in your neighbourhood.

WHAT IS ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

Anti-social behaviour means a wide range of unacceptable activity and includes things like vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting, nuisance neighbours and intimidating groups taking over public spaces. Anti-social behaviour can ruin lives and create an environment where more serious crime can take hold.

Your local authority, the police and social landlords all have strong and effective powers to deal with anti-social behaviour problems.

This leaflet explains what you can expect from the police, your council and other agencies in tackling anti-social behaviour and how you can work with them to solve problems in your neighbourhood.

The Government wants effective action on the ground. We believe that communities which are confident that anti-social behaviour will be tackled effectively are stronger and more secure.

YOUR RIGHTS

Our website www.direct.gov.uk/localcrime gives you information about the police and criminal justice services in your area as well as what you can expect from them.

HOW TO REPORT ASB

If you want to report anti-social behaviour or a crime that is not an emergency, you should call your local police force or council anti-social behaviour team – see the page at the back for details of how to find your local numbers.

Remember, in an emergency, you should always call **999**.

An emergency is:

- when a crime is happening
- when someone suspected of a crime is nearby, or
- when someone is injured, being threatened, or in danger.

Alternatively, if you want to remain anonymous, you can pass on information about crimes to the independent charity, Crimestoppers, either on **0800 555 111** or via www.crimestoppers-uk.org. Information is taken 24 hours, seven days a week, including Christmas Day.

If you want to know the facts and figures about crime in your area, visit our website www.direct.gov.uk/localcrime and type in your postcode to view a 'crime map' of your area.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

Your local authority, the police and social landlords all have strong and effective powers to deal with anti-social behaviour problems.

If anti-social behaviour is affecting you or your family, you can expect your council and the police to treat the problem seriously, take action and then report back to you what they have done.

In your area:

- The local council has a named person or dedicated phone number where you can report anti-social behaviour.
- You can also report problems to your Neighbourhood Policing Team.
- Alternatively, neighbourhood wardens and/or neighbourhood managers, where they exist, provide another way to report anti-social behaviour. To find out whether these schemes operate in your area, contact your local council.
- If you are a tenant or leaseholder of a housing association or local authority, you can also contact them as they have specific powers to tackle problems such as anti-social neighbours.

By visiting www.direct.gov.uk/localcrime you can find out:

- What can be done about anti-social behaviour such as noisy neighbours or intimidating groups hanging around.
- The powers your local council can use to tackle anti-social behaviour – such as ASBOs, parenting orders and premises closure orders (the power to close properties after serious persistent nuisance or disorder).
- Your council and local police's record on using these powers to solve problems.

You can use this information about the powers available to question and challenge your council, the police and local agencies to make sure they take action.

As your elected representatives, your local councillor(s) are there to work with you and others to solve problems in your neighbourhood. They can act on your behalf to raise concerns with the council and other organisations, make progress on difficult issues and report back to you what has happened as a result of your action. If you want

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM YOUR LOCAL POLICE?

Every neighbourhood is different – and so are the problems faced by the people who live there. Neighbourhood Policing Teams work in local areas directly with residents to find out what those crime and anti-social behaviour problems are and help get them resolved.

Your local police force has signed up to a set of national standards called the Policing Pledge which includes commitments to:

- Treat you with dignity and respect and provide fair access to their services.
- Tell you who they are and how to contact them.
- Spend 80% of Neighbourhood Police Team time working visibly in your neighbourhood.
- Give you the opportunity every month to influence policing in your neighbourhood and agree your local priorities.
- If you tell them that you are not happy with their service, respond to you within 24 hours and also talk to you in person.

You can find all the commitments at www.direct.gov.uk/localcrime

to discuss any issues with your local councillor, you can contact them via your council or attend the councillor's advice surgery.

The Government is also providing training to staff dealing with anti-social behaviour to help them work with you better.

IF THEY FAIL TO ACT, WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you have reported anti-social behaviour, but do not feel that action has been taken, you can complain to your Neighbourhood Policing Team (see the previous sections), or to the council through their complaints procedure and ultimately the Local Government Ombudsman.

To find out how well your local authority and police force are working together to cut crime in your area you can visit: <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk>

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

You have a right to expect the police, your council and other agencies to make tackling anti-social behaviour a priority and to respond professionally. But community support can also play an important role, and working with local agencies you can help them take successful action against anti-social behaviour.

You can help the police and other agencies to tackle problems in your neighbourhood by reporting anti-social behaviour when you see it.

By coming forward to report anti-social behaviour you may prevent the same problem happening again and you will help make your community a safer place. Evidence from victims and witnesses is important because it demonstrates the distress and annoyance of anti-social behaviour, and shows how it damages the community. If you report being a victim or witness of anti-social behaviour, support is available to help you at every stage of action.

Your local area may have neighbourhood wardens or a neighbourhood manager who you can speak to about your concerns. Your local council will be able to tell you whether these schemes operate in your area.

There are other things you can do to help the police, your local council and other agencies – for example by joining Neighbourhood Watch, a tenants' or residents' association, by becoming a special constable or a volunteer for Victim Support. You could also attend one of the monthly neighbourhood beat meetings that the police are committed to holding under the Policing Pledge.

By playing an active role in your community you can really help make a difference and create a place where anti-social behaviour is tackled and not tolerated.

Details of how to find your local contacts in the police and other agencies are available on the back page

FINDING CONTACTS IN YOUR AREA

Visit www.direct.gov.uk/localcrime and type in your postcode to:

- **Report anti-social behaviour, or crime when it is not an emergency** – find your police force non-emergency number
- **Find your Neighbourhood Policing Team**
- **Contact your local anti-social behaviour team**
- **Have your say on how criminals pay back to your community** – nominate projects for Community Payback, which is run by the Probation Service.

National Victim Support helpline
0845 3030 900

To find your local victim support service, visit www.direct.gov.uk/localcrime and type in your postcode.

If you do not have access to the internet please call the Communities and Local Government public enquiries line on **0303 444 0000*** for local contact details for these services in your area.

* Standard rates apply. This service is available between 9am and 5pm week days.

Published by Communities and Local Government © Crown Copyright 2010
Printed in February 2010 on paper comprising 100% post consumer waste.
ISBN: 978-1-4098-2156-4

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