

Working together to deal with Antisocial behaviour



Introduction

Everyone would probably agree that people who spray graffiti on public buildings, dump rubbish or behave in a rowdy or ‘yobbish’ way are acting antisocially. Other examples of antisocial behaviour include abandoning vehicles in public places, regularly holding noisy parties that disturb neighbours and throwing fireworks. Some of these activities are actually criminal offences.

Some of us may see certain activities as harmless, but others see them as antisocial behaviour. We can get annoyed about a car regularly being parked outside our house, or because our neighbours don’t cut their grass regularly. Some of us are happy to see young children playing in the street enjoying themselves, while others find the noise disturbing. You might think a noisy summer barbeque in a neighbour’s garden is antisocial, but think it’s good fun if you have been invited.

Some of us are naturally more tolerant than others. Most of us know a work colleague, friend or family member who easily gets annoyed at small things that don’t bother anyone else. You may even be that person.

People who are not very tolerant may regularly phone the police, the borough council or other services about things that others wouldn’t think are a problem. Others may avoid reporting fairly serious incidents because they don’t want to be seen as being a bother, or because they are worried about what may happen to them if they do.

Getting the balance right can be difficult. Understanding what is and what isn’t antisocial behaviour depends on how serious the behaviour is and how often it happens.

There’s a balance between putting up with behaviour that we may personally not agree with, and making sure that we tackle behaviour that really is antisocial.

It is important that we work together to tackle the antisocial behaviour that is affecting people's quality of life.

Antisocial behaviour can make people feel harassed and upset. This booklet gives you information about antisocial behaviour and how we can all work together to help stop it.

This booklet has been put together by the High Peak Community Safety Partnership, which is made up of a number of organisations that work together to make our communities safer.

These organisations include:

- High Peak Borough Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Derbyshire Police
- Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Derbyshire Primary Care Trust
- Derbyshire Probation Trust

For more information about the partnership, please visit our website at www.highpeak.gov.uk



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In an emergency, for example if someone is being violent or threatening another person and there is a danger to someone's life, or if a crime is being committed, always phone 999.

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What is antisocial behaviour?

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 defines antisocial behaviour as acting in a way that causes or is likely to cause alarm, harassment and distress (upset) to one or more people who are not part of the same household.

We (the High Peak Community Safety Partnership) focus on the types of behaviour which cause alarm, harassment and distress (upset). Antisocial behaviour is divided into three categories - nuisance, environmental and personal.

Nuisance

- Shouting
- Swearing
- Urinating in public
- Drunken behaviour
- Inappropriate use of fireworks

Personal

- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Sending offensive messages
- Nuisance phone calls

Environmental

- Fly-tipping (illegally dumping rubbish)
- Dropping litter
- Graffiti
- Vandalism (damaging private property or shared facilities such as phone boxes or playground equipment)

Some of these problems, such as vandalism and drug dealing, although often seen as antisocial behaviour are, in fact, criminal offences.

What can I do?

Let the person know that they are causing you a problem

A useful first step is to speak to the person causing the problem, if you feel it is safe and appropriate to do so. Often people are not aware that they're causing a problem and will stop their behaviour straight away once they realise it is causing a nuisance.

Before you speak to the person, ask yourself the following questions.

- Is my complaint reasonable?
- Am I feeling calm? (If not, think about waiting until you are calm.)
- What am I going to say? How am I going to say it?
- What do I want to achieve?
- Is this a good time to raise the issue?

If you're worried that your neighbour, their partner or their visitors could be violent towards you if you approach them - do not approach them. Instead, get help and advice by contacting one of the organisations listed in the section 'Where can I get help?' on pages 11-23.

Here are some useful tips to keep in mind when talking to someone about the problem that they're causing you.

- Stay calm and be polite and friendly.
- Explain the problem and how it's affecting you or your family.
- Listen to the other person's point of view.
- Do not interrupt the person when they're speaking, and think about what they are saying.
- Try not to shout, even if the other person does.

- Stay in control and do not become abusive.
- Try and find a middle ground that you both agree on.
- If the person is being unreasonable - politely leave.

If you feel that you really cannot approach the person, you might feel more comfortable writing a letter. But be careful not to make the situation worse. Think carefully about how they may interpret your words.

Collect proof

We cannot take action against someone just because someone else has complained. It's important that we have good proof to show what's happening and the effect it's having.

This proof could include keeping a diary or log of:

- when incidents have happened (dates and times of the day);
- what happened; and
- who was involved.

It could also include photographs and video or tape recordings of the incidents. However, always take care not to make problems worse by taking photographs and so on. Do not put yourself at risk. Keep your personal safety in mind.

The organisations listed on pages 11 - 23 can give you advice on the sort of information and proof that can be useful to help support your case.

You can use your own CCTV cameras, but only within the boundaries of your property. If you want to use CCTV to record a wider area, you need to get advice from a solicitor.

If you are a victim or witness of antisocial behaviour and you are frightened to give evidence because you are worried about what will happen to you, you can give evidence anonymously. This type of evidence is called 'hearsay'. A police officer or other professional witness, such as a council official, teacher or doctor can give evidence in court on behalf of a vulnerable witness (someone who may be at risk if they give evidence, or someone who is vulnerable for other

reasons, such as physical, emotional or mental health difficulties).

Report it

We believe that everyone has the right to enjoy their own home and to feel safe when going about their everyday business.

You can help us to stop antisocial behaviour by letting us know when it's happening. Before you do this, think about what you're experiencing. Is it really antisocial behaviour? Or, for example, is it just a group of young people 'hanging around' but not hurting anyone or causing any damage?

If someone's behaviour continues to upset you, please report it. You can get more information on how to report problems on pages 11-23.

In an emergency, for example if someone is being violent or threatening another person and there is a danger to someone's life, or if a crime is being committed, always phone 999.

Personal legal action

It's possible for you to take a case to court yourself, but you'll need to be sure you can show there is a nuisance of some kind.

You can take legal action yourself through the magistrates' court under section 82 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. You may not need a solicitor and it may not be expensive. You must prove to the magistrate that your problem is a nuisance. This may be particularly useful if the problem does not fall within the powers of the antisocial behaviour laws.

This could include disagreements between neighbours, parking issues or disagreements about boundaries. If you want to take action yourself, you should get independent legal advice from a solicitor or from your local citizen's advice bureau.

Think about the effect your behaviour has on others

It's important to try to make sure you don't cause a problem for other people. Here are a few tips.

- Get to know your neighbours so you can discuss any problem in a reasonable way.
- Let your neighbours know if you are planning a party and give them a number to contact you on if the party becomes too loud. Better still, invite your neighbours if you can.
- Do not carry out DIY or use noisy domestic appliances like vacuum cleaners late at night or early in the morning.
- Have your TV, radio and stereo speakers away from walls that you share with your neighbours.
- Do not have your TV, radio or stereo too loud, or play musical instruments loudly, especially late at night, and especially if you live in a flat where noise travels more easily.
- Make sure you are not obstructing the footpath when you park your car. As a rule, always leave enough space for a wheelchair or 'double buggy' to get past.
- Do not block your neighbours' or other people's driveways.
- Know where your children are playing, who's supervising them and what they're doing.
- Keep your dogs and other pets under control.
- Get rid of your rubbish and unwanted items properly.
- Be considerate and make sure you behave as you would want others to behave towards you and your family.

If you've been accused of antisocial behaviour

Think about whether you're responsible for the upset being caused to the person complaining. You may not be aware that your behaviour is causing a problem. There may be an easy way to solve the problem, such as closing your windows when you are playing music, or keeping the noise down at night when most people are trying to sleep.

If you are able to do so, speak to the person who is complaining and follow the same guidance we gave you for speaking to someone who is causing you a nuisance.

If you feel you've been accused unfairly and you are not able to sort the problem out with the person complaining, contact one of the organisations listed on pages 11-23.

These organisations may be able to help you sort out the problem with the person who has complained, or they could refer you for mediation.

If you feel things are not improving, try to collect proof that you're not responsible for the antisocial behaviour that you are being accused of.



Where can I get help?

This section contains information about who you should contact for help if you're experiencing antisocial behaviour.

If you're not happy with the response you receive after contacting any of the organisations listed below, you can complain to the High Peak Community Safety Partnership. If you want to complain, please put your complaint in writing and send it to:

**Community Safety Manager,
High Peak Borough Council,
P O Box 136, Buxton, SK17 1AQ**

Serious and criminal behaviour

Any behaviour you believe to be serious or against the law, should be reported to Derbyshire Police on 101 or 999 in an emergency.

Examples of behaviour that you should report to the police include:

- Criminal damage, such as damage to property;
- Vandalism;
- Making threats of violence or being violent;
- Drug dealing;
- Dangerous dogs;
- Harassment, including racial harassment; and
- Public disturbances, such as fighting.

You can contact Derbyshire Police by phoning their non-emergency number on 101.

If it's an emergency, you should always phone 999.

An emergency is when:

- someone's life is in danger, for example in a car crash when people in the car need help;
- there's a risk that someone could seriously hurt themselves or somebody else, for example you might see somebody threatening somebody else with a knife;
- a crime is happening or is about to happen, for example you may see someone breaking into a house or someone driving a car after drinking alcohol or taking drugs.

Abandoned vehicles

You can report abandoned vehicles to High Peak Borough Council:

01298 28400 or visit
www.highpeak.gov.uk

Arson

To report a fire that needs putting out, or if you are worried that someone might be about to start a fire, phone 999 and ask for 'Fire'.

If you know who is responsible for deliberately starting a fire, please report this to:

- **Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service (phone 999 and ask for 'Fire');**
- **Derbyshire Police by phoning 101; or**
- **Crimestoppers by phoning on 0800 555 111.**

You can also phone 999 to report a fire that is now out, and fire officers will investigate what caused the fire. By doing this, you could possibly help prevent fires starting in the future, as we may be able to identify who is responsible.

If you are worried about someone who has a fascination with fire and think that this might develop into a more serious problem, phone **Derbyshire Fire & Rescue's Prevention Department on 01332 771 221** and ask about the **Firesafe Scheme**.

Bogus callers

Sometimes people may call at your home and try to trick you into having work done that isn't necessary, or they will try to get into your home to steal money or valuables. We call these people 'bogus callers'.

If you are worried that you have been approached or tricked by someone, please phone Derbyshire Police on 101. If it's an emergency, phone 999.

If you have a complaint about the quality, price, quantity or safety of goods or services, phone **Consumer Direct** on **08454 04 05 06**.

Children's safety

If you're worried about the safety of a child, phone:

**Derbyshire County Council's
Call Derbyshire Service on
01629 533190.**

(8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and
9.30am to 4pm Saturdays).

Or, phone the
**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on
0808 800 5000** or visit
www.nspcc.org.uk

Cruelty to animals

If you are worried about how an animal is being treated, phone the **RSPCA's 24-hour cruelty and advice line on 0300 1234 999**, or visit **www.rspca.org.uk**.

Dog mess or stray dogs

For problems to do with animals, including stray dogs, phone High Peak Borough Council on:

01298 28400 or visit
www.highpeak.gov.uk/hp/do-it-online/report-it

Environmental health problems

Phone High Peak Borough Council on:

01298 28400 to report:

- a build-up of rubbish, animal mess or waste materials;

- fumes, gasses and unpleasant smells;
- smoke from burning materials; and
- buildings in an unacceptable condition.

Or visit www.highpeak.gov.uk/hp/do-it-online/report-it

If you rent your home from a registered social landlord contact your housing provider to report problems.



Fireworks

Rules for fireworks

Fireworks cannot be set off between 11pm and 7am, except for Bonfire Night, when they can be let off until midnight, and New Year's Eve, Diwali and Chinese New Year, when the curfew ends at 1am the following day

- It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to buy or carry fireworks
- Throwing or setting off fireworks in the street is also against the law
- Offenders could find themselves with an £80 fine

If you believe that someone is acting inappropriately with fireworks call Derbyshire Police on 101, or 999 in an emergency.

If your complaint relates to the illegal sale or storage of fireworks or you believe that any fireworks do not comply with British Standard BS 7114 contact:

Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 08454 04 05 06 or email trading_standards@derbyshire.gov.uk

For more information visit the Derbyshire County Council website on:

http://derbyshire.gov.uk/community/consumer_advice/fireworks/default.asp

Fly-tipping or fly-posting

To report fly-tipping (illegally dumping rubbish) or fly-posting (illegally putting up posters on buildings, bus shelters and so on), phone High Peak Borough Council on:

01298 28400 or visit www.highpeak.gov.uk/hp/do-it-online/report-it

Graffiti

High Peak Borough Council will remove graffiti from public buildings and property. To report any problems, please phone the council on:

01298 28400 or visit
www.highpeak.gov.uk/hp/do-it-online/report-it

If the graffiti is on a property you rent from a registered social landlord you can also contact them to report any problems.

If you know who is responsible for the graffiti, you can report this to the police by phoning 101, or by phoning Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.



Hate crime

If you are experiencing crime or harassment because of your ethnic background, sex, disability, sexuality, religion or beliefs, you can report this to:

Derbyshire Police by phoning 101 (phone 999 in an emergency).

Victims or witnesses of hate crime can also report incidents to:

Stop Hate UK by calling 0800 138 1625 or having a web chat at www.stophateuk.org/talk

Litter

To report a problem to do with litter, please phone High Peak Borough Council on:

01298 28400 or visit www.highpeak.gov.uk/hp/do-it-online/report-it

Noise

Environmental Health is responsible for statutory noise from private housing and business premises.

To report a problem to do with noise, phone:

High Peak Borough Council on 01298 28400.

If you rent your home from a registered social landlord contact them to report problems.

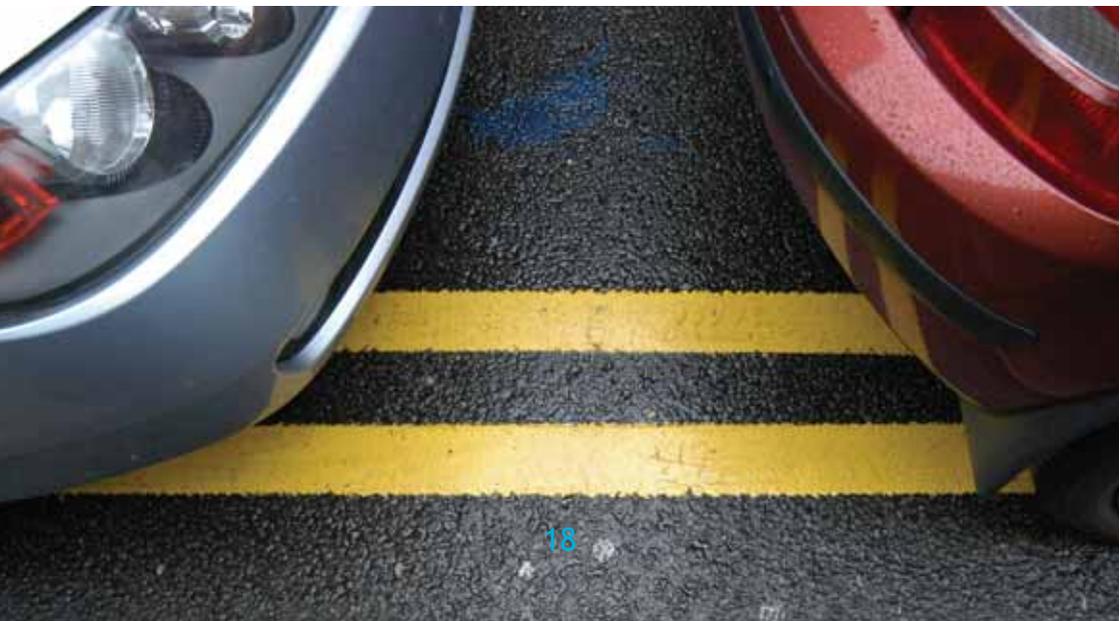
Nuisance neighbours

If the nuisance includes criminal behaviour, such as damage to property or threats of violence, phone Derbyshire Police on 101, or visit your local police station. In an emergency, phone 999.

If you, or your neighbour, rent your home from a registered social landlord you can also contact them for support as well as reporting incidents to the police. The housing provider will check whether your neighbour has broken any conditions in their tenancy agreement. If you rent from a private landlord, you can also tell them about any problems.

You can report other problems with nuisance neighbours to the Community Safety Team by phoning High Peak Borough Council on:

01298 28400, or by going to www.highpeak.gov.uk



Parking issues

If a car is causing a nuisance by breaking parking laws, for example by parking on double yellow lines, phone High Peak Borough Council's civil enforcement officers on:

01538 395 674 or send an email to carparks@highpeak.gov.uk

If a vehicle is parked on the pavement and is causing an obstruction, but there are no parking restrictions, please phone:

Derbyshire Police on 101.

If you want to report people driving with no tax disc, phone the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) on:

0800 032 5202, or visit www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/OwningAVehicle/UntaxedVehicle/DG_4022073

Problems with roads

To report a broken street light or road sign, potholes, damaged pavements, faulty traffic lights or blocked drains, phone Call Derbyshire on:

0845 6 058 058

between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday, and between 9.30am and 4pm Saturday or email:

call_centre@derbyshire.gov.uk

Pubs and other premises licensed to sell alcohol

You can report any nuisance caused by premises licensed to sell alcohol to High Peak Borough Council's Licensing Section by phoning:

01298 28400.

If you would like more information on how to apply for a review of a premises licence or club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003, you can get this from High Peak Council via the business tab.

www.highpeak.gov.uk/hp/council-services/business/licensing

Racial harassment

You can report incidents of racial harassment to Derbyshire Police by phoning 101 or 999 if it is an emergency. If you are a victim or witness of racial harassment, you can also report incidents to:

Stop Hate UK by phoning 0800 138 1625. Or, you can visit their website www.stophateuk.org

Support for victims

Victim Support provides help to victims and witnesses of crime. This can include emotional support, information or practical help.

You can contact North Derbyshire Victim Support by phoning 0300 303 1947

8am to 8pm Mon-Fri and Saturday mornings.



Out of these hours you can phone the

**Victim Support line on
0845 30 30 900 or email
eastmidlands.vcu@
victimsupport.org.uk**

Information may also be found on the
Victim Support website:

www.victimsupport.org.uk

Services are free and confidential and
you do not have to have reported the
crime to receive support.

Domestic Abuse

If you are a victim of domestic
violence (male or female), you can
get help by phoning:

**Derbyshire WISH North 01457
857714 or email
WISHNorthUsers@ncha.org.uk for
support in High Peak.**

Derbyshire WISH provides Refuge and
Floating Support services for victims
of domestic abuse. Further
information can also be found on the
website at:

www.personalisedsupport.co.uk

Vandalism

**To report vandalism, phone
Derbyshire Police on 101.**

**If the vandalism is still taking place,
phone 999.**

You can also report vandalism,
without giving your name, to:

**Crimestoppers by phoning
0800 555 111.**

If you rent your home from a
registered social landlord contact
your housing provider to report any
problems.

Vulnerable adults

A vulnerable adult can be anyone over the age of 18 who:

- has a physical disability;
- has sight or hearing problems;
- has a learning disability;
- has a mental-health problem; or
- is not able to protect themselves from harm or abuse.

Many frail or confused elderly people are especially vulnerable.

Abuse is behaviour towards a person that causes them upset, puts them in danger or takes away their rights. Neglect is also abuse if it leads to harm or upset.

If you feel you are being abused or know a person you think is at risk, it is important to tell someone.

If a crime has been committed or if you're worried about someone's safety, phone Derbyshire Police on 101 (if it is not an emergency) or 999 (if it is an emergency).

You should ring Call Derbyshire on:
08456 058 058 or 01629 533190

if you suspect an adult at risk. The phone line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In an emergency, dial 999.

Information will be treated as confidential.

An emergency service is available outside these hours to deal with high-risk situations that cannot wait for the local office to open.

The number to phone is 0845 6042886.

You can get more information at www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/what_we_do/safeguarding_adults/default.asp

If you want to stay anonymous

You can phone Crimestoppers anonymously about any crime that you know about on 0800 555 111. Anonymous means that you do not have to give your name or address. You should report most incidents of antisocial behaviour direct to the organisations listed in this booklet, but there may be times when you want to give information anonymously to Crimestoppers, for example if you know anyone who is:

- committing crimes - such as handling stolen goods;
- breaking the conditions of their antisocial behaviour order (ASBO);
- responsible for graffiti;
- dealing, selling, growing or manufacturing drugs;
- regularly driving after drinking alcohol or taking drugs; or
- driving with no licence, a suspended licence or with no insurance.

Derbyshire Alert

Derbyshire Alert is the community messaging system for the whole of Derbyshire, brought to you by Derbyshire Constabulary.

By registering with Derbyshire Alert, you can receive news and appeals, local crime information, and prevention advice to your e-mail, telephone or as a text message.

Registering with this site is completely free, and not only allows you to receive messages about your local area, but also allows you to feed back information to your local policing teams to help them better police your neighbourhood.

For more information visit the website www.derbyshirealert.co.uk



Photos: SMDC, Dreamstime.com and HPBC
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