

## **Anti-Social Behaviour under 10's Policy**

**1.0** When young people first behave anti-socially or commit minor offences, they can be dealt with outside of the court system. At Stockton we use a variety of interventions such as interviews and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's). If the behaviour continues we ultimately turn to the courts using an application for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or a Criminal Anti-social Behaviour Order (CRASBO) to curb the behaviour. An ASBO may be obtained against any person who is aged 10 or over provided certain statutory criteria are satisfied. In the original Home Office guidance for ASBO's it was stated that it would be rare for an order to be made against a child aged 10 or 11.

**1.1** However, there may be occasions where an investigation or complaint will highlight a young person aged 10 or under who is getting involved in the beginning of low level anti-social behaviour (ASB), or who is part of or on the periphery of a group involved in ASB, or maybe a sibling of an older brother or sister involved in ASB. In Stockton we have in place an ASB Support Officer who will take referrals for this cohort of young people to determine if we can prevent the behaviour from escalating whilst offering support to the young person and / or their families.

**1.2** Referrals to the ASB Support Officer in these cases may come from various places such as ASB Officers, ASB Victim & Witness Support Officer, Tristar Homes Ltd, Social Services, Schools and Preventions services. Upon receipt of a referral the ASB Support Officer will send a letter to offer support and invite the parent to meet to explore the services available. Three letters will be sent / hand delivered (app 1 – 3). All services offered by the ASB Support Officer are optional therefore parents can opt out at this stage. However, if after the third letter our services are refused and the anti social behaviour has continued then the young person will be referred to the Anti Social Behaviour Team who will visit in uniform to inform the family what the team can do if the behaviour continues. A case file will be opened by the ASB Officer in this instance and the normal ASB procedure will be followed.

**1.3** The first letter from the ASB Support Officer will ask for a meeting with the parent in the first instance, this will take place in the home and will be to discuss the behaviour which led to the referral and any other problems there may be. An ASB Support: Initial Assessment Form (app 4) will be completed at this stage. An action plan will be drawn up which will determine the way forward and highlight any referrals required to other agencies for the young person. The whole service will be explained at this first meeting which will include a discussion about ASBO's, evictions and the landlord liaison scheme.

**1.4** Referrals will also be considered for all the other members of the family such as services for domestic violence or drugs and alcohol. The ASB Support Officer can provide Parent Support advice to help the parent deal with issues such as making house rules, encouraging good behaviour, using consequences and building bridges in conjunction with the Strengthening Families Programme.

**2.0** The second meeting will also take place at home and will be attended by the young person, the parent and the ASB Support Officer. This will be an opportunity to discuss the behaviour, talk through the action plan and offer advice on referrals and youth services in the area.

**2.1** A Behaviour Promise (app 5 for example) will be drawn up which may include both prohibitions and positive behaviour. It will be written in a way and language that

the young person will understand. The parent is required to sign the Promise along with the young person and the ASB Support Officer, and it is required that the parent should support and help their child to keep to the Promise. It is explained that if the promise is breached the young person will be required to come into the Police Station for an interview. A Parental Agreement (app 6 for example) will be drawn up and parents and asked to sign this agreement in order to support the young person to change their behaviour.

**2.2** The ASB Support Officer will conduct a weekly home visit for a period of six weeks and may amend the Behaviour Promise, discuss any further issues or offer any necessary support services. At the end of the six weeks the Behaviour Promise will either be renewed or the case may be closed. If the behaviour has continued or escalated and the promises have been breached then an interview will be arranged with the young person, parent, ASB Support Officer and ASB Team Manager at the Police Station. This interview is conducted more formally and the ASB Team Manager will discuss the enforcement action that may be taken if the ASB continues. The case will then be referred to the ASB team who will follow the normal ASB procedure.

**3.0** As an additional support measure the Community Safety team are now offering a counselling service which can be tailored to the young person, parents or other members of the family. There are often underlying issues when behaviour becomes an issue and therefore counselling gives the opportunity to look at how behaviour can affect others. This is a talking therapy to enable the person to find a way forward that suits them, and is often used when there are other issues present such as anxiety or bereavement. In the case of a young person it may be useful to identify what other things may be affecting them which lead them to engage in ASB.

**3.1** The Community Safety team now also offer a Mediation Service which may be useful when young people engage in ASB. The service may help to improve relationships within the family. The mediator will not take sides and will remain impartial, they will look at ways of improving communication and resolving conflict within the family then help to guide all involved to come to an agreement for the future that everyone is happy with.

**3.2** The Community Safety team also offer education in schools to guide young people away from Anti Social Behaviour. This includes the Roach lessons to all Year 6 pupils and the Young Victim's class which can be tailored to different issues. Junior Neighbourhood Watch involves Year 4's with an age specific discussion about Anti Social Behaviour and alcohol issues. A Behaviour Promise can also be carried out in conjunction with schools who would get involved with the ASB Support Officer and the parent in determining what is acceptable in school.

**3.3** A full breakdown of the Under 10's procedure is detailed below:

## Anti Social Behaviour under 10's Protocol flowchart

