

The ABC of ASB

ASB – or anti-social behaviour – is always high on the list of things that blight the lives of the people in Woking and Surrey as a whole.

ASB is an offence, but the majority of it can be dealt with without resorting to the laws of the land. In fact, many types of ASB are meant to be resolved by Woking Borough Council.

Understanding ASB and knowing how, and to whom, to report it, will reduce the problem.

Generally, ASB is anything that adversely affects your wellbeing. This could be littering or fly-tipping, or an abandoned car taking up valuable parking space in your road. Other examples of ASB are graffitiing and fly-posting, which both spoil an otherwise pleasant area. Drinking on the street, as well as any resulting aggressive behaviour, is ASB. A dog barking all day or through the night also counts as ASB.

It is worth understanding that ASB is rarely recorded as a crime – police usually describe it as “an incident”. But ASB can be, and often is, upgraded to a Public Order Offence, which is a crime.

For many of us, ASB is all about noise. For example, next-door neighbours playing loud music, cars and motorbikes racing along the roads and in car parks, youths gathering in the local park, and so on. These are a problem, and can affect the wellbeing of the honest citizens of Woking.

So what can we all do about it?

The first step is to make sure you are being reasonable. For example, if you live close to a children’s playground and the children laugh and shout as they play, that is not ASB.

The second step is not easy, but can make a big difference: try to resolve the problem by talking to the offender. Some local youths were congregating in a playground after dark near me. When approached, they had no idea their behaviour was stressing the neighbours. They apologised and moved elsewhere.

You can do this, too. If a car is abandoned and taking up other people’s parking space, try speaking politely with the owner. Bear in mind that the police and council will often respond to reports of ASB by asking you if you have actually spoken with the perpetrator first.

The next stage is to identify who to contact. If the ASB is on private land, as is often the case, the police can’t do anything and you need to approach the landowners or Woking Borough Council. If you aren’t sure who to contact, the police can tell you.

Most importantly, don’t feel powerless to resolve ASB yourself. Report, report, report! Call the police on 101 or contact the police or the council using the links below. As honest citizens, we all have the right to a safe and blight-free life.

Helpful links

- <https://www.surrey.police.uk/ro/report/asb/asb/report-antisocial-behaviour/>
- <https://woking.gov.uk/community/community-safety/anti-social-behaviour-asb/how-report-anti-social-behaviour>