

What is an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)?

Where all early interventions and warnings fail to address reported Anti-social behaviour or the reported anti-social behaviour is deemed to be serious, there is a risk of harm to victims and/or an individual perpetrator has already demonstrated an unwillingness to adhere to statutory interventions (i.e. Supervision Orders) the local authority (or the Police/Registered Social Landlord/Housing Action Trust) may deem it necessary to apply for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO).

An ASBO is a civil court order designed to curb behaviour and protect individual victims, neighbours, or even whole communities from continued anti-social behaviour, that has been proven to have caused alarm, harassment or distress. An ASBO is not a punishment, nor should they be considered a quick fix. An application for an ASBO is invariably used as a last resort where early interventions (ABC's) and warnings have failed to change behaviour.

An ASBO is in effect a formal agreement imposed on the perpetrator(s) by the court, whereby the perpetrator(s) of anti-social behaviour are required to adhere to agreed terms (prohibitions) outlining the behaviours deemed to be unacceptable.

The terms (prohibitions) within an ASBO can ban a person from:

- behaving in a threatening, intimidating or disruptive manner
- using threatening or verbally abusive language
- spending time with a particular group of friends, where those friends are also proven to be engaging in anti-social behaviour or where they have a direct influence on the behaviour of the named perpetrator.
- visiting certain areas

ASBO's can be gained against anybody from the Age of 10 upwards (there is no upper age limit) and lasts for a minimum of two years, (again there is no upper time limit). ASBO's secured against juveniles are reviewed after 12 months.

Getting an ASBO is not deemed a criminal conviction and does not show on a person's criminal record, however breach of an ASBO (which in effect is a breach of the agreement with the court) is a criminal offence which can be prosecuted by the police and if found the perpetrator is found guilty can be punishable by a fine or up to five years in prison (2 years if a juvenile).

Publicity:

Once an ASBO is secured, it is normal practice that ASBO's gained in Leeds are publicised, however, this is a police procedure requiring a full risk assessment to identify any reasons why the order should not be publicised, including exceptions such as:

- where there are ongoing court proceedings that may be prejudiced
- where reporting restrictions have been applied in a juvenile court
- where publicity could put a person at severe risk of harm.

Where publicity is approved, this is normally done through the production of an ASBO leaflet bearing a photograph of the perpetrator and the terms of their ASBO, which is then distributed within the area affected by the anti-social behaviour.

Where reporting restrictions are lifted at court, articles relating to ASBO's may also be featured in the local and national press.