



ADVICE ON HOW TO DEAL WITH



**anti-social
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 district 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.

THIS BOOKLET

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 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to make our communities safer.



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WHAT IS ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

A wide variety of behaviour can be defined as ‘anti-social’ if it has a negative impact on others.

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) has two legal definitions depending on where it takes place:

- ASB that occurs within a housing context is defined as behaviour that causes or is likely to cause “nuisance or annoyance”.
- ASB that occurs in public spaces is defined as behaviour that causes or is likely to cause “harassment, alarm or distress”.

Both definitions describe how someone’s behaviour affects other people.

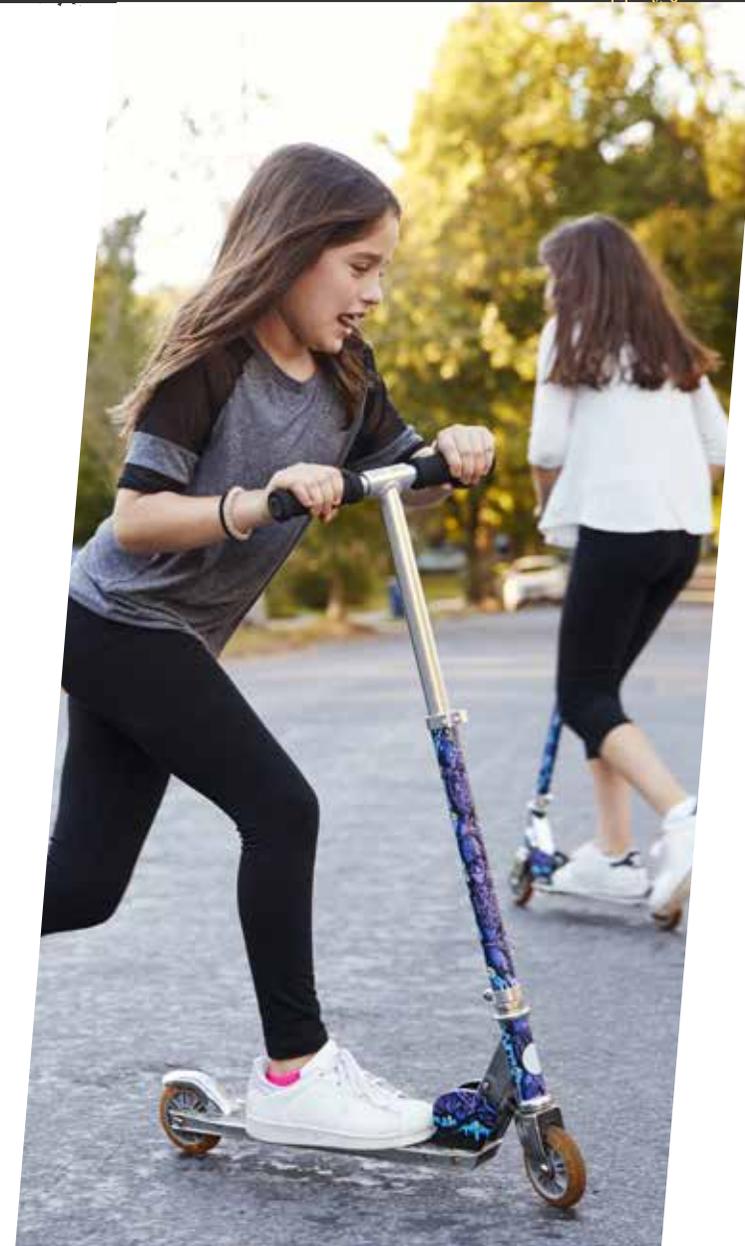
Nuisance describes behaviour on private property that is lawful but causes inconvenience or annoyance for neighbours. Those affected by “nuisance” behaviour can bring civil proceedings against their neighbour and may be able to obtain compensation.

Harassment is the repeated targeting of a victim with behaviour that is meant to upset them.

Some problems, such as vandalism and drug dealing, are often described as antisocial behaviour but are, in fact, criminal offences.

There are some types of behaviour, that may annoy some people, but that we would generally not consider to be antisocial behaviour. Examples include:

- The sound of children playing or a baby crying.
- Boundary disputes or breaches of covenants.
- Noise caused by everyday living, such as flushing toilets and closing doors.
- A one-off party.
- Minor personal arguments and differences.
- Religious or cultural practice.
- Parking (including badly parked vehicles).
- Neighbours doing DIY (at reasonable times of the day).
- Groups of people in the street or in parks, unless they are being rowdy, abusive, causing damage or committing other crimes.



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 this is safe and appropriate. 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 page 3.

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 or sending a text. Think carefully before using social media: other people can comment and get involved if messages are public. Be careful not to make the situation worse. Think carefully about how they may interpret your words

COLLECT EVIDENCE

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 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.

You can use 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 the Information Commissioner's Office (www.ico.org.uk) or 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 may, in certain circumstances, be able to give evidence but stay anonymous. This type of evidence is called 'hearsay'. A police officer or other professional witness, such as a council official, health worker, teacher or doctor can also 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).

The courts have powers to punish people who intimidate witnesses.

REPORT IT

We believe that everyone has the right 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 page 3.

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 and ask for the police.

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.

This could include disagreements between neighbours, parking issues or disagreements about boundaries.

If you want to take action yourself, you should first get independent legal advice from a solicitor or speak to Citizen's Advice. Legal cover is also provided as part of some home insurance policies and, if you are a member, you may be able to get some free advice from your trade union.

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.
- Also, let them know if you are planning a barbecue, to let off fireworks or light a bonfire. That will give them chance to bring their washing or pets indoors, or let you know if your plans will cause them problems.
- 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.
- If you are losing your hearing, find out about hearing aids and equipment from an organisation such as the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (www.rnid.org.uk)

- 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 page 3. These organisations may be able to help you sort out the problem with the person who has complained, or they could refer you to a professional mediation service.

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.

“The first to apologise is the bravest, the first to forgive is the strongest, the first to forgive is the happiest”

- Unknown

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

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

SERIOUS AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SERIOUS AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR?

This includes things such as:

- criminal damage, such as damage to property;
- vandalism;
- making threats of violence or being violent;
- drug dealing or drug misuse;
- dangerous dogs;
- harassment, including racial harassment; and
- public disturbances, such as fighting.

WHO CAN HELP?

You should report things that are serious and against the law to the police.

You can contact Staffordshire 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; and
- a crime is happening or is about to happen, for example you may see someone breaking into a house or people fighting.

You can also give information anonymously (without anybody knowing) to Crimestoppers by phoning 0800 555 111 or visit: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>



ABANDONED VEHICLES

WHAT IS AN ABANDONED VEHICLE?

A vehicle is abandoned if it has been left by the owner permanently or for a long time when they should not do so.

Vehicles do not count as 'abandoned' simply because they have been parked in the same place for several days.

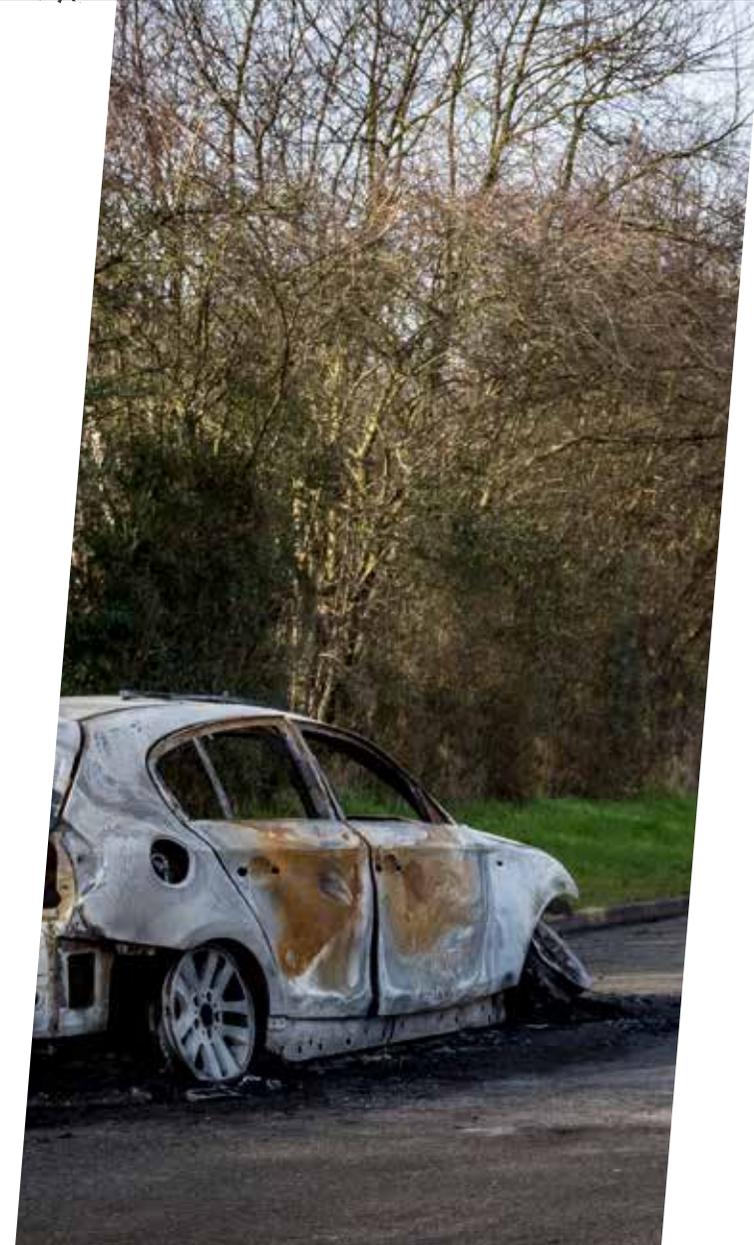
It is likely that a vehicle is abandoned if:

- it has no registered keeper, is untaxed or does not have a current MOT certificate.
- it is stationary for a significant amount of time
- it is significantly damaged, run down or unroadworthy - with flat tyres, wheels removed or broken windows
- is burned out
- has number plates missing

WHO CAN HELP?

You can check to see if a vehicle is taxed and has a current MOT certificate by visiting: www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla

You can report abandoned vehicles to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council on line at www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report_It



ABUSE OF VULNERABLE ADULTS

Abuse is behaviour that can lead to harm or distress, for example:

- physical abuse - which can include hitting or pushing
- emotional abuse - which can include bullying
- financial abuse - which includes stealing money or property
- sexual abuse - which can include sexual activity without consent
- neglect - which includes self-neglect, ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, and the withholding of the essentials of life, such as medication, adequate food or heating

Staffordshire County Council investigates report of abuse relating to adults who have care and support needs. Adults with care and support needs may:

- be elderly and frail because of ill-health, disability or condition such as dementia
- have a learning disability
- have a physical disability or be blind or deaf
- have mental health needs including dementia
- not have capacity to make some decisions and is in need of care and support

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 Staffordshire Police on 101 (if it is not an emergency) or 999 (if it is a emergency).

You can report abuse to Staffordshire County Council by phoning 0345 604 2719

If you have concerns about the welfare of an adult then please contact Staffordshire Cares on 0300 111 8010 or by emailing staffordshirecares@staffordshire.gov.uk

An emergency service is available if you need to report high-risk situations overnight or at the weekend that cannot wait for the local office to open. You can contact the emergency service by phoning 0345 6042886.

You can get more information at www.staffordshire.gov.uk

ARSON

WHAT IS ARSON?

This is when someone sets fire to something on purpose, or recklessly starts a fire, that destroys or damages property without a lawful reason for doing so.

WHO CAN HELP?

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:

- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (phone 999 and ask for 'Fire');
- Staffordshire Police by phoning 101; or
- Crimestoppers by phoning on 0800 555 111 (100% anonymous).

You can also phone 0300 330 1000 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 Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service on 0300 330 1000..



BOGUS CALLERS

WHAT ARE BOGUS CALLERS?

People who call at your home and try to trick (or scam) you into having work done that isn't necessary, or they will try to get into your home to steal money or valuables.

WHO CAN HELP?

Reporting doorstep crime can help to protect vulnerable people.

If you are worried that you have been scammed or tricked by someone, please phone:

- Staffordshire Police on 101 or 999 if it's an emergency.
- Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 (www.actionfraud.police.uk)
- Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133 (www.citizensadvice.org.uk), or
- Staffordshire Trading Standards Confidential Hotline 01785 330356.

BONFIRES

WHAT IS A BONFIRE?

A bonfire is a large open-air fire, such as where people burn rubbish or as part of a celebration.

A one-off event is unlikely to be classed as a nuisance unless the fire is very large or burns for a long time. The burning of products such as cables and plastics is prohibited.

Someone who lights a fire that creates a danger for road users, stops the use of the highway, or results in injury to a road user commits an offence.

Fires should not be started on land not in your control without the landowners permission.

WHO CAN HELP?

If you are planning to have a bonfire, you can help to make sure that you do not light it if your property is surrounded by others and the wind will take the smoke onto adjoining properties.

You can also speak to your neighbours before the lighting the fire in case they were planning to hang the washing or do something else that might be affected by the fire.

Household waste material should not be burnt:

- Green/organic waste should be composted or placed in your brown bin
- Paper, cardboard, glass, plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays, food tins, drink cans, foil, aerosols and cartons should be placed in your grey bin
- Other, general rubbish should go in your blue bin.

You can also dispose of waste at the household recycling centres (tips) in Biddulph, Cheadle or Leek (www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/HWRC).

If a bonfire is causing you a nuisance then speaking to the person responsible may stop the problem.

If this does not work then Staffordshire Moorlands District Council will investigate complaints of smoke that create a 'statutory nuisance'. You can report problems online at www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report_It. You will find options for reporting household (domestic) nuisance and nuisances caused by businesses (commercial nuisance).

BOUNDARY DISPUTES

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Sometimes neighbours disagree about things like who owns a wall that needs repairing, who should pay to replace a fence or where one property starts and the other ends.

People often think they are responsible for the left (or right) hand boundary wherever they live, but there isn't any legal basis for this.

WHO CAN HELP?

The title deeds to the property may provide an indication of who is responsible for the boundary and where the boundary runs. HM Land Registry may also hold useful information: <https://onlinelandregistry.org.uk>.

This information can be difficult to understand and may not give a definite answer, so you may need to speak to a solicitor or Citizens Advice. You may also be able to get legal advice from your home insurer or your trade union (if you are a member of one).

A solicitor will also look to see whether there is anything to show that someone has taken on responsibility for the boundary or whether it has historically been jointly maintained. If it has been jointly maintained over the years then it is likely to be regarded as a party fence/wall and both neighbours will be responsible for it.

CHILD ABUSE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ABUSE OF A CHILD?

Serious concerns about the safety of a child or young person up to the age of 18.

A child or young person who is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed.

A child is living in circumstances where they are treated badly and not cared for properly.

WHO CAN HELP?

If you believe a child is at risk of immediate harm, this must be reported to the police on 999.

If you're worried about the safety of a child, phone Staffordshire County Council's First Response Service on 0800 1313 126 (Monday to Thursday from 8:30am to 5pm and Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm), or, report it online using the reporting section of their website www.staffordshire.gov.uk.

In an emergency outside these hours, please phone 0345 604 2886. Other useful contacts include:

- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000 (www.nspcc.org.uk)
- Childline 0800 1111 (www.childline.org.uk)

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CRUELTY TO ANIMALS?

It is illegal to cause unnecessary suffering to domestic animals, farm animals or other protected species.

Animals have five key welfare needs that must be met:

- Environment - somewhere suitable to live, rest, hide, exercise and explore
- Diet - a suitable diet
- Behaviour - the ability to behave naturally for their species, such as digging, flying, jumping, and running.
- Companionship - housed with, or apart, from other animals as required
- Health - protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

WHO CAN HELP?

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.

Staffordshire County Council deal with complaints about the health and welfare of livestock on farms, in livestock markets, in abattoirs or in transit: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Business/Animalhealth/AnimalHealthandWelfareComplaints.aspx

For concerns on the welfare of horses please contact the RSPCA or World Horse Welfare by phoning 08000 480 180



DANGEROUS DOGS

WHAT ARE DANGEROUS DOGS/BANNED DOG BREEDS

It is illegal for a dog to be 'out of control' or to bite or attack someone. It is also an offence if a person is worried or afraid (the term is 'reasonable apprehension') that a dog may bite them. So it's important to ensure that your dog is kept under control at all times and in all places.

It is against the law to own certain types of dogs.

WHO CAN HELP?

If you suspect that your neighbour is keeping a banned breed such as a pit bull terrier, please report the matter to the police on 101.

If you're not sure which breeds are banned, see the Government's list of banned dog breeds www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/banned-dogs

DOMESTIC CCTV

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

It can be troubling if a neighbour's CCTV overlooks all, or part of your property and you may feel like this is an invasion of your privacy.

WHO CAN HELP?

If you wish to get advice on domestic CCTV concerns contact the Information Commissioner (phone 0303 123 1113 or, at their website www.ico.org.uk).

The inappropriate use of CCTV could also be a criminal offence and may need to be reported to the police by calling 101.



FIREWORKS

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

It is against the law to carry fireworks in public if you're under 18 (unless in the course of employment)

Fireworks must not be sold to anyone who is under 18

F4 firework - industrial fireworks - can only be used by professionals at organised events

It is an offence under the Explosives Act 1875 to tamper with or modify fireworks

Fireworks must not be let off between 11pm and 7am, except:

- Chinese New Year, Diwali and New Year's Eve, when the period is extended until 1am, and
- 5th November when the period is extended until midnight.

It is illegal to set off fireworks (including sparklers) in the street or public place.

WHO CAN HELP?

You can report problems to do with fireworks by phoning the Staffordshire Firework hotline on 01785 277855.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service provide advice on firework safety at www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/your-safety/safety-at-home/bonfire-night-safety.

You can also report firework related problems to the police using tel: 101 (999 in an emergency).

FIXING OR SELLING CARS ON THE STREET

WHAT ARE THE RULES?

You cannot park two or more cars that are advertised for sale on the road within 500m of each other.

You cannot repair, or carry out maintenance, servicing, improvement or dismantling of a motor vehicle (or of any part of or accessory to a motor vehicle) on a road for business purposes or financial gain. This does not apply to essential repairs carried out within 72 hours of an accident or breakdown.

WHO CAN HELP?

If a car is causing a nuisance by breaking parking laws, for example by parking on double yellow lines, visit Staffordshire County Council website at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Report/Report.aspx

If a vehicle is parked on the pavement and is causing an obstruction, but there are no parking restrictions, please phone Staffordshire Police on 101.

FLY-POSTING

WHAT IS FLY-POSTING?

If you put or post any sign, placard, notice, leaflet, banner or anything similar which can be seen from the highway or any public place then you may be guilty of fly-posting. This includes illegally putting up posters on buildings, bus shelters and so on

WHO CAN HELP?

Report fly-posting online at www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report_It.

FLY-TIPPING

WHAT IS FLY-TIPPING?

Fly-tipping is illegal dumping of liquid or solid waste on land or in water (illegally dumping rubbish). You can also be guilty of fly-tipping if you dispose of waste by burning.

Householders have a duty to take reasonable measures to ensure that any household waste is disposed of correctly, such as by using their domestic bin or taking to a recycling centre (tip). If the waste is given to a third party who is not licensed to transport waste or who dumps the waste, then the householder commits an offence.

WHO CAN HELP?

Report fly-tipping online at www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report_It.

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



GRAFFITI

WHAT IS GRAFFITI?

Graffiti includes drawings, scribbles, messages or tags that are painted, written, sprayed or etched onto walls or other surfaces. It is a criminal offence to graffiti someone else's property without a lawful excuse.

If the graffiti is offensive and directed at members of a racial group, then the person responsible will have committed an offence of racially-aggravated criminal damage.

If the graffiti includes words or images which could cause harassment, alarm or distress, then an offence may have been committed under the Public Order Act 1986.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council will remove graffiti from public buildings and property. To report any problems, please report online at www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report_It.

If the graffiti is on a property you rent from a social housing provider, such as Moorlands Housing (phone 0345 345 0272 or by visiting their website www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk), 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.



HARMFUL WEEDS AND NON-NATIVE PLANTS

WHAT ARE HARMFUL WEEDS AND NON-NATIVE PLANTS?

All landowners have a responsibility to make sure harmful weeds and non-native plants with the potential to harm people, livestock or the environment do not spread to a neighbouring property and are treated correctly.

The most common invasive, non-native plants include

- Japanese knotweed
- Giant hogweed
- Himalayan balsam
- Rhododendron ponticum
- New Zealand pigmyweed (this is banned from sale)

You can find more information by visiting:

www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-the-spread-of-harmful-invasive-and-non-native-plants

www.nonnativespecies.org/

WHO CAN HELP?

If the plants are found on land owned by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council then please report it immediately by visiting www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/

If the plants are growing in the wild, please report it to:

Natural England Enquiries Team,
Technical Services Natural England,
County Hall, Spetchley Road, WORCESTER, WR5 2NP

Email: weedenquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 060 3900



HATE CRIME (INCLUDING RACIAL HARASSMENT) AND HATE INCIDENTS

WHAT IS A HATE CRIME AND WHAT IS A HATE INCIDENT?

A hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's:

- race or perceived race;
- religion or perceived religion;
- sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation;
- disability or perceived disability;
- and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.

A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.

Not all hate incidents will amount to criminal offences, but it is equally important that these are reported and recorded by the police.

For more information visit www.staffordshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/hco/hate-crime/what-is-hate-crime

WHO CAN HELP?

If you are experiencing crime or harassment because of your ethnic background, sex, disability, sexuality, religion or beliefs, you can report this to Staffordshire Police by phoning on 101 (phone 999 in an emergency).

Victims or witnesses of hate crime can also report incidents to Challenge North Staffs online at challengenorthstaffs.org/self-reporting-form/ or by texting 07537 741 4477 or phoning 0330 1111 999.



HIGH HEDGES

WHAT IS A HIGH HEDGE?

A high hedge is one which:

- is formed by a line of 2 or more trees or shrubs
- is wholly or mainly of evergreen or semi-evergreen species
- is over 2 metres tall
- forms a barrier to light or access at heights of more than 2 metres above ground level and this is not significantly affected by the presence of gaps

WHO CAN HELP?

You can complain to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council if you and your neighbours are unable to come to an agreement about the height of an evergreen hedge.

Visit www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/769/Resolving-high-hedge-disputes for more information.

If your disagreement is about a hedge that does not meet the description above then please speak to a solicitor or Citizens Advice.

LITTER

WHAT IS LITTER?

Litter is anything from a crisp packet or cigarette butt to a bag of rubbish that is thrown down, dropped or discarded in a public place.

WHO CAN HELP?

Report littering to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council online at www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report_It



MESSY GARDENS

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

We sometimes receive complaints about the condition of gardens, especially if they are overgrown, or are not being regularly maintained. Everyone should try to keep their homes and gardens in an acceptable condition, otherwise neighbour disputes can arise.

Please see separate sections if you are concerned about:

- harmful weeds such as knotweed,
- a build-up of rubbish, animal mess or waste materials (Statutory nuisance);

trees and bushes blocking the highway (Problems with roads)

WHO CAN HELP?

Advice on resolving garden related concerns can be found on the .Gov website - www.gov.uk/how-to-resolve-neighbour-disputes

If you, or the offending occupant, live in a social housing property then please report your concerns to your landlord (see page 34 for useful contacts).

NEIGHBOUR DISPUTES

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Sometimes people fall out with their neighbours. Some of the most common reasons are:

- Boundary disputes, including repair or removal of a fence or wall
- Cutting down trees and hedges
- Building an extension or other building
- Parking over someone's driveway or in "their spot"
- Noise
- Messy gardens/house (or changes to a neighbour's home that you feel may impact on the value of your property)
- Responsibility of maintaining or keeping the shared amenities clean (for example, shared drains and pipes, shared gardens or a communal rooftop on a block of flats).

WHO CAN HELP?

You will find help about all of those issues by looking for the individual topics in this booklet.

You can also get advice on how to resolve neighbour disputes at the .Gov website at www.gov.uk/how-to-resolve-neighbour-disputes

You may also wish to obtain independent advice from a solicitor or Citizens Advice.

If you think your neighbour has broken the law - for example, they've been violent or threatening then contact Staffordshire Police. Call 999 if the crime is still happening or 101 to report a crime later.

If you think your neighbour's making trouble because of your race, religion, sexuality or other characteristic, it could be a hate crime or hate incident. More information on hate incidents can be found on page 19.

If you, or your neighbour, rent your home from a social housing provider, such as Your Housing Group (phone 0345 345 0272 or, report the matter online at www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk), 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.

NOISE

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council will investigate:

- dogs barking for long periods of time or frequently at unsociable hours
- excessively loud music
- loud work at unsociable times
- continuous ringing burglar alarms
- loud music (pubs and clubs for example)
- activity during unsociable hours
- loud noise from fans or other industrial machinery
- excessively loud working practices (for example drilling)
- loud outdoor speakers
- constant hum of fan equipment.

- The Council will not investigate one off events such as birthday parties, noises that only occur occasionally, or children playing outside.

To report a problem to do with noise (either from a house or a business), visit www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report_It

If you rent your home from a registered social landlord, such as Your Housing Group (phone 0345 345 0272 or, report the matter online at www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk), contact them to report problems.



NUISANCE CAUSED BY DOGS (DOG MESS OR STRAY DOGS)

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY NUISANCE CAUSED BY DOGS?

Stray dogs - A dog that is roaming freely and not under the control of any person, irrespective of whether it has a home (whether or not the dog wears a collar with identification or is microchipped).

Dog Fouling - Dog owners must clean up straight away if their dog fouls in a public area. If they do not, then they commit an offence.

It is also an offence if your dog is causing a nuisance and you are told to put it on a lead by an authorised officer (normally a council worker or police officer).

More details can be found by visiting www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/pspo

WHO CAN HELP?

You can report dog fouling online to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council at www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/Report_It.

If you see a stray or roaming dog, you can contact Staffordshire Moorlands District Council on 0345 605 3014 Monday to Friday. If you find a stray dog after this time, you can take the dog to City Dogs Home (01782 304130).

More information can be found at: www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/article/1091/Dog-control.



PARKING ISSUES

WHAT DO WE MEAN

People generally tend to park outside their own home but no one has an automatic right to do so. It's not always possible and other road users have the right to park outside your home providing they are not contravening the Highway Code.

The Highway Code asks that people DO NOT park their vehicle where it might cause an obstruction to other pedestrians or road users, and cites the example of not parking in front of another person's driveway.

WHO CAN HELP?

If a car is causing a nuisance by breaking parking laws, for example by parking on double yellow lines, visit Staffordshire County Council website at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Report/Report.aspx

If a vehicle is parked on the pavement and is causing an obstruction, but there are no parking restrictions, please phone Staffordshire Police on 101.

If you want advice about road signs or markings, please go to Staffordshire County Councils website - www.staffordshire.gov.uk.

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.

PLANNING DISPUTES

WHAT DO WE MEAN

You may be concerned that a neighbour has built something that affects you or your home. The neighbour may require planning permission for things like:

- Building an extension or outbuilding
- Creating a driveway and dropped kerb
- Using the property for a different purpose
- Putting up a conservatory

WHO CAN HELP?

Planning permission may not be necessary if the works meet certain conditions. You can check the precise rules on the Planning Portal website (www.planningportal.co.uk).

Staffordshire Moorlands may be able to take action if someone has carried out works without planning permission, has not complied with planning conditions, or to tidy up untidy land.

You can report problems at www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report_It (look for the Planning Enforcement Complaint Form).

PROBLEMS WITH ROADS

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

- Broken street light or road sign,
- potholes,
- damaged pavements,
- faulty traffic lights
- blocked drains, or
- trees or hedges blocking the highway.

WHO CAN HELP?

Staffordshire County Council by calling 0300 111 8000 or by visiting or at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Report/Report.aspx.

PUBS AND OTHER PREMISES LICENSED TO SELL ALCOHOL

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Local residents can request that their licensing authority review a premises licence where activities at licensed premises are undermining one or more of the licensing objectives

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance;
- The protection of children from harm.

You can find more information by visiting www.gov.uk/guidance/alcohol-licensing#community-involvement-in-licensing

WHO CAN HELP?

You can report any nuisance caused by premises licensed to sell alcohol to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council's Licensing Team at <https://myforms.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/CONTACTLICENSING/launch>

STATUTORY NUISANCE (ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM)

WHAT IS A STATUTORY NUISANCE?

Problems that affect health or cause a nuisance are described as 'statutory nuisances' and include:

- a build-up of rubbish, animal mess or waste materials;
- fumes, gases and unpleasant smells;
- noise
- smoke from burning materials; and
- buildings in an unacceptable condition.

WHO CAN HELP?

You can report problems online at www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/Report-It. You will find options for reporting household (domestic) nuisance domestic and nuisances caused by businesses (commercial nuisance).

If you rent your home from a registered social landlord, such as Your Housing Group (phone 0345 345 0272 or visit their website www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk). If you are a tenant of another social housing provider contact them to report problems.

VANDALISM (CRIMINAL DAMAGE)

WHAT IS VANDALISM?

Vandalism or criminal damage is when someone illegally destroys or damages someone else's property.

WHO CAN HELP?

To report vandalism, phone Staffordshire 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, such as Your Housing Group (phone 0345 345 0272), contact your housing provider to report any problems. Or, report your issue on Your Housing groups website www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk (this is for YHG customers only).

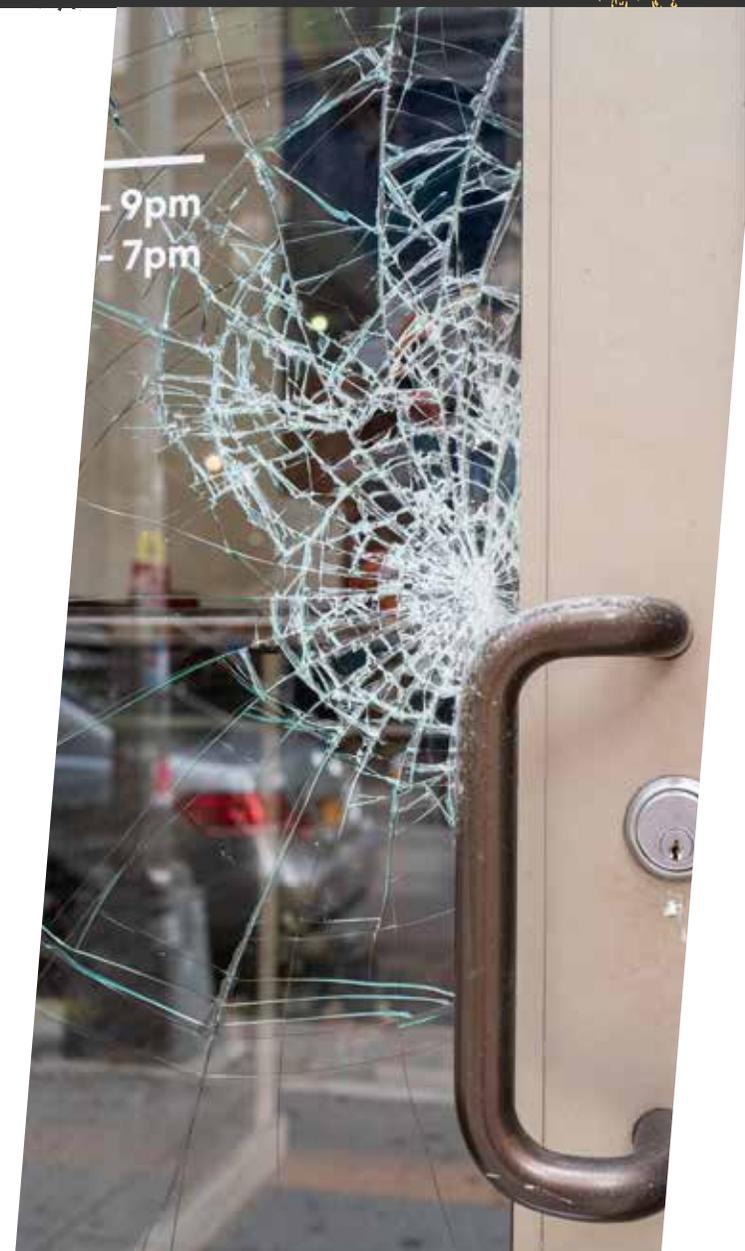
VEHICLE-RELATED NUISANCE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY VEHICLE-RELATED NUISANCE?

Vehicles being driven at high speed, or erratically on car parks, or on major and minor roads

WHO CAN HELP?

If you witness people driving irresponsibly, racing or making their cars skid call the police on 101 (999 in an emergency).



SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS

If you are a victim of crime then you can obtain emotional support, information or practical help by contacting the Victim Gateway at www.staffsvictimsgateway.org.uk or by phoning 0330 0881 339

If you are a victim of domestic abuse, you can get help by phoning New Era (Domestic Abuse service operating across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent) 24-hour helpline on 0300 303 3778. Or, for more information visit their website <http://www.new-era.uk>.

IF YOU WANT TO STAY ANONYMOUS

You can phone Crimestoppers anonymously about any crime that you know about. Anonymous means that you do not have to give your name. You can phone 0800 555 111. 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;
- breaking the conditions of their criminal behaviour orders and/or injunctions;
- 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.

STAFFORDSHIRE SMART ALERT

Staffordshire Smart Alert allows Staffordshire Police, local authorities, Neighbourhood Watch and other public organisations to keep you informed about issues affecting your local area in a timely way. You will receive localised messages about crime, engagement events, appeals, prevention advice and general policing activity.

You can register to receive alerts by visiting www.staffordshiresmartalert.co.uk

USEFUL CONTACTS

Adult social care (Staffordshire County Council)

0300 111 8010

www.staffordshire.gov.uk

staffordshirecares@staffordshire.gov.uk

Catch 22 (Missing from home or care and child exploitation)

01782 237106

www.catch-22.org.uk/offers/missing-and-cse/

catch22cse@catch-22.org.uk (for child sexual
exploitation enquires)

catch22cce@catch-22.org.uk (for child criminal
exploitation enquires)

Challenge North Staffordshire (Racial harassment support)

0330 1111 999

www.challengenorthstaffs.org

cns@snsCab.org.uk

Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice Staffordshire North & Stoke-on-Trent
(Biddulph office)

0808 278 78 76

www.snsCab.org.uk/

advice@snsCab.org.uk

Citizens Advice Cheadle

0808 278 7951

www.citizensadviceheadle.org.uk/

admin@citizensadviceheadle.org.uk

Citizens Advice Leek

03444 111 444

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/leek/

advice@leekcab.cabnet.org.uk

Childline

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk/

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

0300 456 8390

www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

Child Welfare Concerns (Staffordshire County Council's First Response Service)

If you believe the child to be at risk of immediate
harm, this must be reported to the police on 999 or
101

0800 1313 126 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm)

emergency outside these hours, please phone
0345 604 2886

[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Care-for-children-and-
families/homepage.aspx](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Care-for-children-and-families/homepage.aspx)

Crimestoppers

0800 555 111

<http://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)

0800 032 5202

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency

.Gov website

(advice on a range of matters)

www.gov.uk

Information Commissioner's Office

0303 123 1113

www.ico.org.uk

Mankind

(information, support and signposting service to men suffering from domestic abuse)

01823 334244

www.mankind.org.uk/

Mind

(advice on how to cope in a crisis)

www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/

New Era

(Domestic Abuse service)

Or, for more information visit their website

24-hour helpline: 0300 303 3778

www.new-era.uk

new-era@victimsupport.org.uk

Perpetrator Service

01785 601690

<https://www.rrpartnership.com/new-era>

new-era@rrpgov.uk

North Staffordshire Urgent Mental Health Helpline

If someone's life is at risk because they have seriously injured themselves or taken an overdose, call 999.

If you do not feel you can keep yourself, or someone else safe from immediate risk of harm, call 999.

0300 123 0907

www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Advice-support-and-care-for-adults/Keeping-well-and-staying-healthy/Mental-health.aspx

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

0808 800 5000

www.nspcc.org.uk

RNID (National hearing loss charity)

0880 808 0123

www.rnid.org.uk

Email information@rnid.org.uk

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)

0300 1234 999

www.rspca.org.uk

Samaritans

116 123

www.samaritans.org

Email jo@samaritans.org

Shout

(free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope)

Text 85258

<https://giveusashout.org/>

Staffordshire County Council

General enquiries: 300 111 8000

www.staffordshire.gov.uk

contactus@staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service

0300 330 1000 (999 in an emergency)

www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/

communityadviceteam@staffordshirefire.gov.uk

Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline

Call 0808 800 2234

Text 0786 002 2821

7.00pm to 2.00am on weekdays and 2.00pm to 2.00am at weekends

www.brighter-futures.org.uk

staffordshire.helpline@brighter-futures.org.uk

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

0345 605 3010

www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk

Staffordshire Police

101 (call 999 in an emergency)

www.staffordshire.police.uk/

Staffs Housing

01782 744533

www.staffshousing.org.uk

hello@staffshousing.org.uk

Staying Safe

(resources for people with suicidal thoughts)

www.stayingsafe.net

Support Staffordshire (Support for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector)

07531 711388

[www.supportstaffordshire.org.uk/about-us-contacts/
contact-us/staffordshire-moorlands](http://www.supportstaffordshire.org.uk/about-us-contacts/contact-us/staffordshire-moorlands)

Staffordshiremoorlands@supportstaffordshire.org.uk

Talk to Frank (information about drugs)

Phone 0300 123 6600

Text 82111

www.talktofrank.com/

frank@talktofrank.com

T3 Stars (Staffordshire Substance Misuse Recovery Service)

01785 241393

humankindcharity.org.uk

t3stars.stafford@humankindcharity.org.uk

Victim Support Staffordshire

0300 303 3778

Out of hours Supportline: 08 08 16 89 111

[https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/resources/
staffordshire/](https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/resources/staffordshire/)

Young Minds (Stopping young people's mental health reaching crisis point)

Young people, text YM to 85258

Parents Helpline 0808 802 5544

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

Your Housing Group

0345 345 0272

www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk