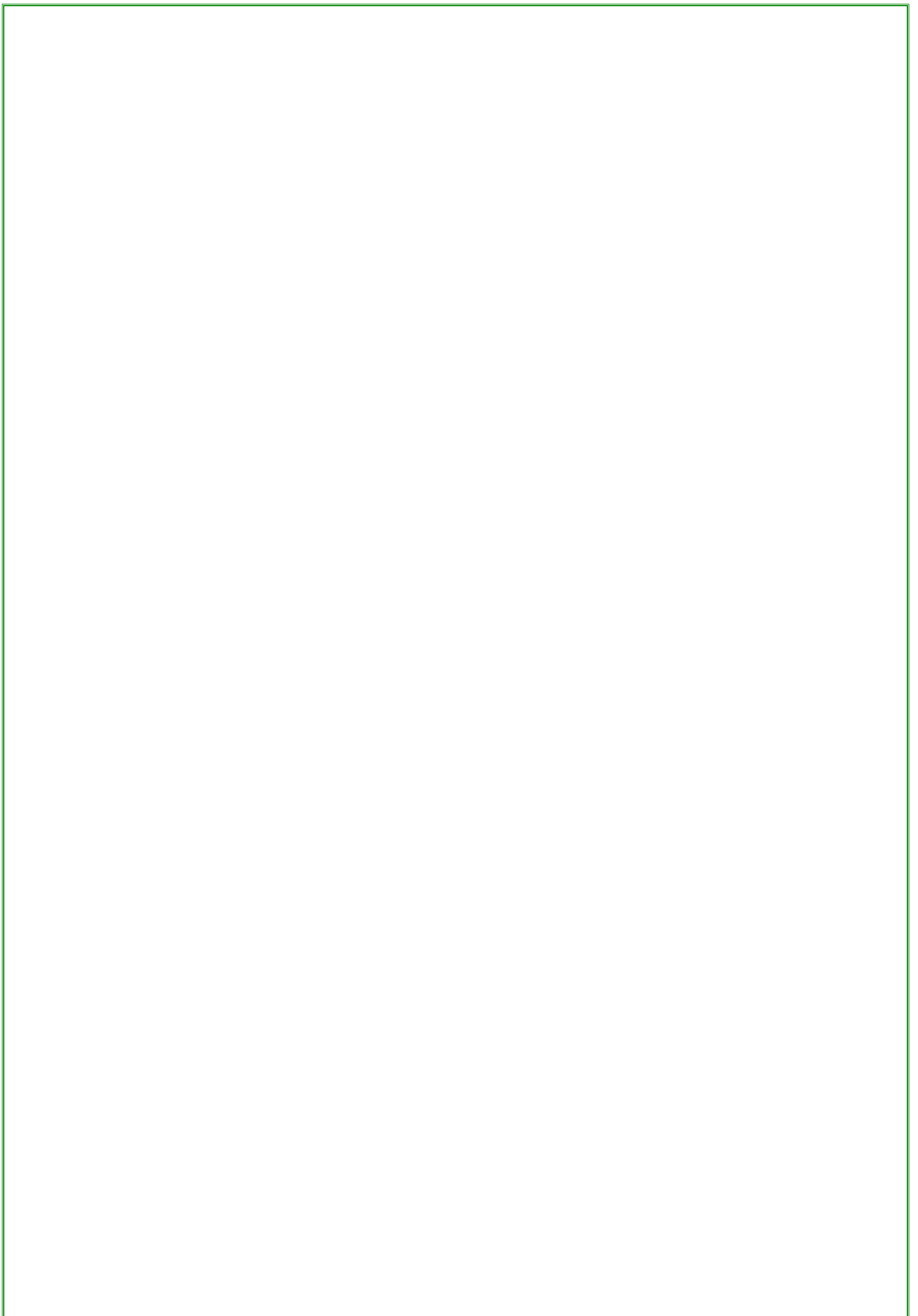


What you can do about
anti-social behaviour
in Huntingdonshire



A SELF HELP GUIDE



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Urdu

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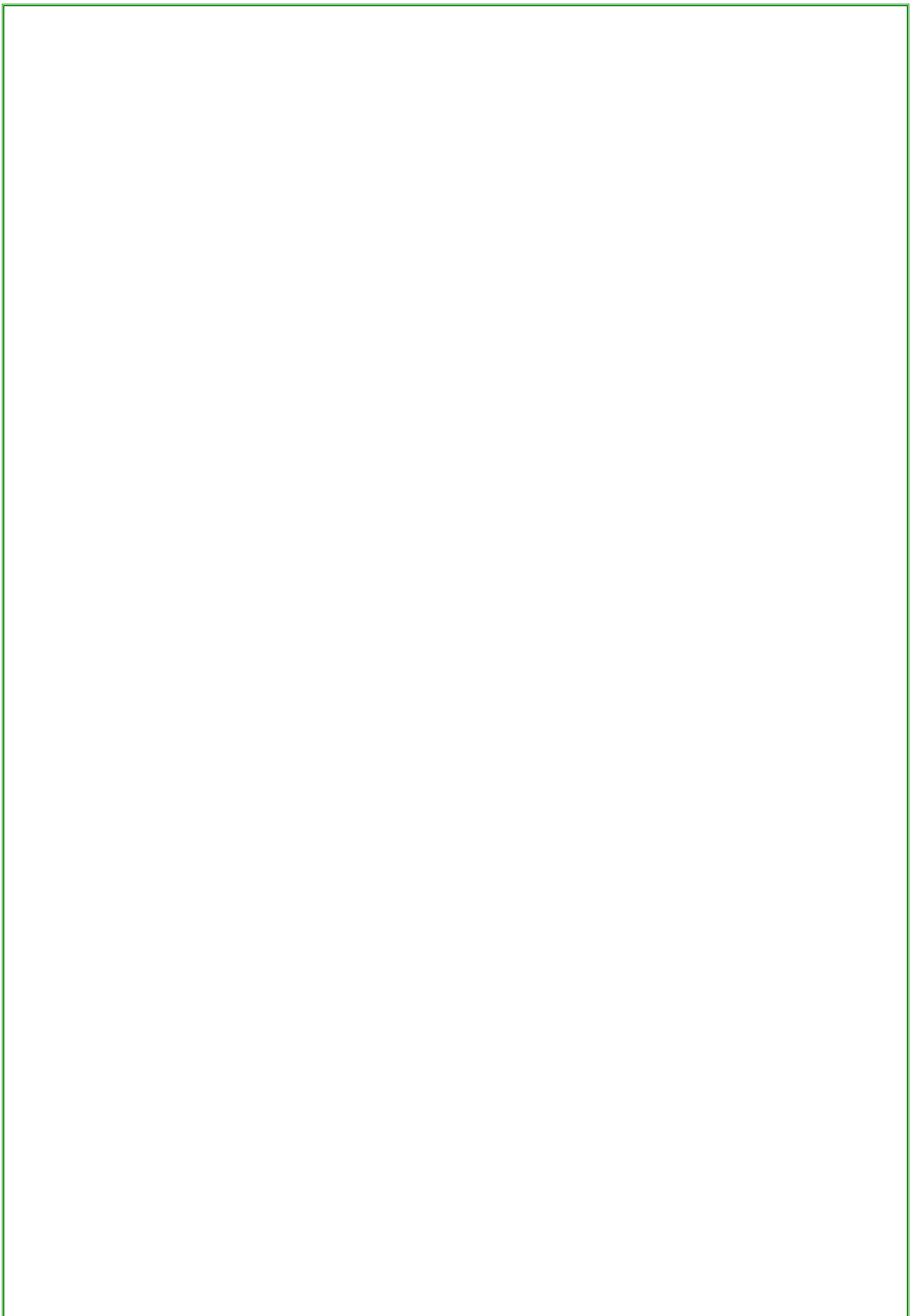
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Introduction

Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) is a partnership of Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC); Cambridgeshire Constabulary; Registered Social Landlords (RSLs); Crown Prosecution Service; Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust (PCT); Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service; Cambridgeshire County Council including services such as National Probation Service, Youth Offending Service (YOS), Trading Standards, Social Care and Office of Children Young People's Service (OCYPS) which comprises services such as Connexions, Youth Service, Education Welfare and Secondary Support; as well as other organisations including Victim Support and Witness Service and drug and alcohol treatment agencies.

- We are committed to taking action to deal with anti-social behaviour.
- We recognise that to tackle anti-social behaviour we need to work in partnership.
- We share information, where reasonable and appropriate, to prevent and reduce anti-social behaviour problems.
- We support the rights of the residents of Huntingdonshire to enjoy a safe and peaceful home environment.
- We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that residents fully comply with their obligations to the community not to behave in an anti-social manner.
- We will seek to improve policies within our individual organisations that help to provide the best possible service to the community of Huntingdonshire.

This guide shows how you and your community can work together with the Partnership to reduce anti-social behaviour in Huntingdonshire and enhance the safety and quality of life of residents.

The guide aims to show the types of anti-social behaviour commonly experienced and gives advice on how we can work together to tackle these problems and how you can seek help and support from the most appropriate organisations.

The contact details of all agencies mentioned in this document are given on the *Contact Details* sheet in this pack.

What is ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR is a name given to a wide range of 'low level' crimes and types of nuisance behaviour. Although incidents in isolation may not seem very serious, the cumulative effect can be very distressing.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 defines anti-social behaviour as "acting in a manner which causes or is likely to cause distress, harassment or alarm to one or more persons not of the same household as the perpetrator".

Put simply, anti-social behaviour is something that upsets or frightens others and destroys the peace, safety and wellbeing of the neighbourhood. It can affect anyone at any time.

How it can affect you

If not dealt with anti-social behaviour can cause serious problems including:

- High levels of fear of crime, making life miserable for many people and preventing them from going about their normal everyday activities.
- Long term emotional and physical problems experienced by the victims.
- Residents moving out of the area.
- 'No go' areas.
- Damage to local businesses and community groups.

Because anti-social behaviour can cause alarm, harassment and distress this may eventually lead to people not feeling comfortable or safe in their home or community; anger and aggression towards those thought to be responsible, and even depression.

Common types of anti-social behaviour can include:

- Noise nuisance, for example, from neighbours or groups gathering in public.
- Damage such as graffiti and vandalism.
- Intimidation, shouting and swearing.
- Rowdy behaviour by drunken people.
- Selling and using drugs and solvent abuse.
- Dogs being allowed to foul in public places, as well as uncontrolled pets.
- Race and hate harassment and crime.
- Nuisance and noise from business use.
- Vehicle nuisance including boy racers, abandoned vehicles and riding motorcycles and mini motos on footpaths and green areas.
- Fly tipping and litter.
- Arson and fire setting, for example, bin fires and haystack fires.

How can I avoid causing anti-social behaviour?

The best thing to do is to avoid any action that might cause a nuisance to others. For example:

- When doing DIY, gardening or housework, do not carry out loud work at night or very early in the morning.
- Talk to your neighbours if you intend to have a party. Don't let parties become too loud or go on too late.
- Do not play music, audio equipment or the TV loudly, especially at night.
- Keep your pets under control.
- Be aware of where your children are, who is supervising them and what they are doing. Talk to them about respecting the areas they play in and the people that live there.
- Take responsibility for your children and visitors if their behaviour is likely to cause harassment or nuisance to others.
- Avoid using excessive foul language outside the home, in the garden and in public areas.
- Dispose of rubbish and unwanted items in the correct way.
- Do not get involved in criminal activity.
- Be considerate and ensure that you behave as you would wish others to behave towards you and your family.

If you find yourself accused of anti-social behaviour, you should think about whether you are responsible for the distress being caused to the complainant. You may have been unaware that your behaviour was causing problems to others, and there may be an easy way in which the problem might be solved, for example, supervising your children when they are playing ball games outside, or closing windows if you are playing music loudly, and not doing so when most people might be trying to sleep.

It is generally best if such problems can be talked about and a solution found before both parties have got too annoyed.

If you feel you have been unfairly accused and are not able to sort out the problem with the complainant then you might consider mediation. Further details of this service are given in the Support section of this guide.

What can I do if I am experiencing anti-social behaviour?

If the problem is not too serious, then you could consider speaking to the person involved. Often the best way to sort out a problem is by talking to each other. Try to see each other's point of view. It may be that the person does not realise that they are causing a problem or that there is simply a difference in lifestyle and routines, for example, coming and going late at night might mean that they are shift workers or a garden full of rubbish may suggest that they are not physically able to tidy up or make repairs.

Speaking face to face is better than shouting or writing letters because the person may become defensive. A solution reached by negotiation and agreement will often be quicker and more effective than one imposed by a third party.

It can be helpful to prepare before you talk to the person:

- Think about what you want to say.
- Be clear about what the problem is and how it affects you.
- Do not stray from the main issue.
- Think of possible solutions or compromises.
- Try and choose a good moment to approach the other party.
- Try talking it through with a friend first.

Some useful tips for the meeting:

- Try to stay calm and friendly; being aggressive will not help.
- Explain what the problem is, how it affects you and how it makes you feel.
- Listen to the other person to gain a better understanding of their point of view.
- Do not interrupt whilst they are talking; think about what they are saying.
- Try not to shout even if the other person does; stay in control and do not become abusive.
- Be tolerant.
- If the other person becomes unreasonable, calmly walk away from the discussion.

If this approach does not work or you do not feel that you can approach the person directly then you might feel more comfortable writing a letter. Care should be taken not to make the situation worse.

In this pack are some *sample letters* that may give you some ideas if you need to write to someone about an anti-social behaviour problem. You should always ensure that you keep all letters polite and friendly in tone.

What else can I do?

Collecting evidence

If things don't improve you should start to collect evidence of the problem. You should do this whether you decide to take action yourself or if you wish another organisation to act on your behalf. Many agencies will have incident reporting forms, which you can use to write down dates and times and the nature of incident. You could also take photographs, for example, of damage, cars being repaired, etc. If you know of other people who are affected you could ask them to keep records as well. It is important to keep a record of incidents in order to help provide evidence of the problem and these records should contain as much information as possible.

The support of the community is absolutely vital in all investigations. Initially, by providing information, this brings details of the anti-social behaviour and/or individuals causing distress to the attention of the agencies in the Partnership. It further provides information on the specific problems and/or individuals, and by doing so helps agencies to pin point the exact nature of what is happening and who is involved.

An incident reporting form, logbook and guidance notes are included in this pack.

If necessary and appropriate, individual agencies will share the information you provide with each other. In all cases, agencies will not reveal your identity to perpetrators of anti-social behaviour unless you have given permission to do so; but, you should bear in mind that sometimes, because of the nature of the complaint, it may be apparent who the complainant is.

Working together as a community

Some problems affect larger sections of the community and require the community to stand together to tackle them. This is particularly so when anti-social behaviour leads to an increased fear of crime. These can be brought to the attention of the local Safer Neighbourhood Panel at which the public have the opportunity to raise local concerns and influence decisions about Policing priorities in their area, as well as having a chance to meet and talk to a wide range of agencies. You can find out more about Neighbourhood Policing by visiting www.cambs-police.co.uk.

You may also wish to join a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, or start up a scheme if there is not already one running in your area. To find out about schemes in your area contact the Police on 0345 456 4564.

E-cops is a way of communicating with your local Neighbourhood Policing Team. It is an e-mail newsletter scheme run by Cambridgeshire Constabulary which keeps you informed of local crime information, community news and policing activities in your neighbourhood. A regular e-mail bulletin from your Neighbourhood Policing Team tells you what is happening in your area. E-cops also gives you direct and easy access to your Neighbourhood Policing Team, so that you can let the Police have information about crime and anti-social behaviour in your local area at a time convenient to you.

Private CCTV

You may wish to provide evidence from Close Circuit Television (CCTV), but you should note that CCTV should only be used within the boundaries of your own property. Use covering a wider area may require appropriate licences.

Personal legal action

A solicitor or advice worker may be able to help when you are experiencing nuisance, suffering from harassment or involved in a dispute. Legal aid may be available for some people.

There are some particular types of problem that might be viewed as anti-social behaviour which would be classed as civil cases, for example, a neighbour parking on your privately owned land and blocking your access or your neighbour cutting down trees on your land. You may wish to seek the services of a solicitor to resolve these problems.

A list of suitable specialist solicitors is available from Citizens Advice Bureau.

Court cases

It is important to appreciate that without evidence the individual agencies within the Partnership cannot easily investigate problems or present a case at court. The Human Rights Act 1998 ensures that all actions taken by the Courts and Partnership agencies are necessary as well as proportionate to how that behaviour affects others. For example, excluding a person from an area which included the doctors surgery and post office for causing noise nuisance an adjoining park at night might be considered unreasonable and changed to exclusion during night time only, thus allowing that person access to essential services. However, such an exclusion might be considered reasonable if evidence was presented showing that the person was harassing staff and clients of the surgery or post office.

A case cannot be taken to court unless evidence is given and witnesses are willing to attend court. Sometimes people feel anxious about giving evidence, either for fear of reprisals or general reluctance to go to Court. The Courts have powers to punish those responsible for witness intimidation and injunction orders can be made to protect witnesses. The Witness Service can provide support to people going to court. Information on this service can be found in the Support section of this guide. In some circumstances, a professional witness statement can be made on behalf of a witness or complainant by a staff member of one of the partnership agencies. However, it should be noted that evidence is likely to be viewed much more seriously if the person is willing to attend court themselves.

Who tackles anti-social behaviour in Huntingdonshire?

Police

If you need some-one to attend an incident of anti-social behaviour or you wish to report a problem, such as property being damaged or someone being physically attacked, you should contact the Police. Anti-social behaviour is something that Cambridgeshire Constabulary takes very seriously, although they do have to prioritise the calls they receive and sometimes it is not possible for the Police to attend a report of anti-social behaviour immediately. If it will be some time before a police officer or community support officer can be sent to deal with the matter, then the Police operator will tell you when you can expect this to happen.

- The 24-hour non-emergency telephone number is 0345 456 456 4.
- For serious incidents, when lives are at risk or when the perpetrators are still at the scene, call 999 immediately – remember this number is for **emergency use ONLY**.

You can also report incidents through e-cops – the web link can be found on the Constabulary website www.cambs-police.co.uk. For more about e-cops see the *What else can I do? – working together as a community* section of this Guide.

Once you have reported the problem you may be contacted for further information, this may be by telephone or personal visit. The officer (who may be your local Community Beat Manager or Police Community Support Officer) will then be able to advise you of what action might be taken.

This may include:

- Making a record of your complaint with a view to taking further action if it happens again.
- Recording your complaint and then advising the perpetrator of the consequences of their actions and the impact it is having.
- Arresting the perpetrators and taking them to court if there is enough evidence. You may be asked to give a witness statement and attend court to give your evidence, if necessary. You will receive advice and support if you have to attend court. Details for Witness Service and Victim Support are given in the *Support* section at the end of this document and on the *Contact Details* sheet in this pack.

Fire Service

Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service is committed to working in partnership to reduce anti-social behaviour problems of arson and fire setting and making malicious or hoax calls (reporting fires when there isn't one).

For details on how to report concerns about arson please see the enclosed leaflet in this Guide or ring 999 if there is a danger from fire.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards is part of Cambridgeshire County Council and they deal with a wide range of consumer related issues. One of the matters they deal with which is closely linked to anti-social behaviour is that of under-age sales. There are age limits for the sale of many products including:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco products, including cigarettes
- Knives and offensive weapons
- Aerosol paints
- Fireworks
- Solvents and gas lighter refills.

If you think that a business has been selling any of these items to someone who is under-age, you can report them to Consumer Direct who will pass details to the local Trading Standards office. Telephone details can be found on the *Contact Details* sheet in this pack. It will be helpful if you can provide as much information as possible, for example, the name and address of the business you are reporting and details of when the under-age sale was made, what was bought and how old you think the buyer was.

Trading Standards will also investigate concerns about illegal and rogue traders, who can also have an impact on local communities.

Luminus Group – Neighbourhood Wardens

The Luminus Group Neighbourhood Warden Service works primarily with Luminus tenants, but also closely with local communities, partner and other agencies.

Wardens help maintain the general wellbeing of the area in which they work and provide reassurance by reporting and tackling the problems associated with anti-social behaviour and problems that affect the environment of the area. They aim to create promote and sustain a cleaner and safer environment and reduce the fear of crime.

Some issues that Neighbourhood Wardens help with include:

- Dealing with litter, dog fouling and graffiti.
- Identifying and removing abandoned vehicles.
- Reporting and removing flytipping.
- Reporting faulty street lights and other defective street furniture.

Landlords

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

RSLs in Huntingdonshire are committed to tackling anti-social behaviour. They have a legal responsibility to address complaints of anti-social behaviour from and against their tenants and have been given powers to tackle many problems. If you are a tenant of an RSL or the person you believe to be responsible for the anti-social behaviour is a tenant, then you should contact their landlord. Details of major RSLs with housing stock in the Huntingdonshire District are given on the *Contact Details* sheet enclosed with this Guide.

It is a condition of an RSL tenancy agreement not to cause nuisance or annoyance to others. Tenants are responsible for their own behaviour and for the behaviour of every person living in or visiting their home. Their tenancy may be at risk if they are found to be responsible for anti-social behaviour. RSLs work very closely with Huntingdonshire District Council; if a tenant is evicted for anti-social behaviour it is unlikely that they would be considered to be included on District Council's homeless register for re-housing.

When the RSL receives a complaint, generally, they will try to form a clear picture of the problem by talking to both the complainant and the perpetrator. Confidentiality of the complainant will be maintained where possible, though the nature of the complaint may identify the complainant. If it is agreed that a nuisance is being caused then the RSL will draw up an action plan, and it is likely that they will request you create an incident log, as this forms part of the evidence of the problem.

RSLs may liaise with other partner agencies to assess the best way of stopping anti-social behaviour. They also use many different ways of resolving problems and this may include: tenancy support, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) and Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), Parental Control Agreements (PCAs) or Parenting Orders (POs); they may also use mediation services or take legal action against some-one's tenancy – for more information on these interventions see the *How do Partnership agencies resolve anti-social behaviour* and the *Support – Mediation* sections of this Guide.

Private Landlords

Private Landlords are encouraged to engage with Partnership agencies to work together to manage the anti-social behaviour of their tenants and also within the community.

Huntingdonshire District Council

At Huntingdonshire District Council there are several departments who deal with anti-social behaviour related issues: Community Safety, Environmental Health, Planning and Operations, which includes the CCTV and Street Ranger services. Complaints and concerns can be registered in writing, by telephone or via the Huntingdonshire District Council's website.

Community Safety

The Community Safety team administers the work of Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership.

Based in the team are two Anti-social Behaviour Caseworkers who:

- Investigate complaints of anti-social behaviour from the public and co-ordinate a response which may need to involve other District Council departments or agencies.
- Offer advice and information on a wide range of anti-social behaviour issues.
- Signpost people to the most appropriate agency, if appropriate.
- Work in partnership with other agencies to put in place interventions with identified perpetrators of persistent anti-social behaviour.
- Provide advice and assistance to people who want to set up a local action group to address particular anti-social behaviour problems in their area.

CCTV

The District Council CCTV service is part of the Operations Division. The CCTV system is owned and operated by Huntingdonshire District Council. It is intended to detect and/or deter criminal and anti-social behaviour and reduce the fear of crime and does not focus on people going about their legitimate business.

The areas covered by CCTV are:

- The town centres of St Ives, St Neots and Ramsey and Huntingdon.
- Additional areas in Huntingdon – Mayfield Road and the Oak Tree Centre / Maple Centre, part of Sallowbush Road and part of St Peters Road.
- The Broadway shopping centre, the Recreation ground in Yaxley
- District Council controlled car parks.
- Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots Recreation Centres.

The District Council also owns a Mobile CCTV Vehicle which provides a CCTV service that can be deployed to areas in the District not covered by the fixed camera system. There is an agreement whereby partner agencies can also use this vehicle.

Planning

The Planning Enforcement team investigates alleged breaches of planning control, some of which may increase anti-social behaviour. They are all treated in confidence although it must be appreciated that sometimes the source of the complaint can be fairly obvious, for example it might be that the development can only be seen from one place.

Common complaints relate to the erection of fences and buildings without planning permission, the unauthorised display of advertisements, failure to comply with planning conditions, and the change of use of land and/or buildings. The Planning Enforcement team cannot deal with civil issues such as boundary disputes or trespass or activities taking place on the highway or other publicly-owned/maintained land.

Action will be decided based on the outcome of an assessment of the complaint and may include:

- Serving a formal Notice and/or prosecution.
- Inviting an application for planning permission to be considered.
- Taking no further action.

Licensing

The 2003 Licensing Act covers the sale and supply of alcohol, as well as other licensed activities. It brought the responsibility for such licenses under the District Council. The Licensing Panel has four main objectives when managing issues regarding licensed premises. These are:

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

In relation to anti-social behaviour there is a further key aim:

- The necessary protection of local residents, whose lives can be blighted by disturbance and anti-social behaviour associated with the behaviour of some people visiting licensed premises of entertainment.

All of these issues are considered when granting a licence, and in cases of complaint, which may lead the review of licence. If it is proved that there are anti-social behaviour problems associated with a licensed premises the Licensing Panel may suspend or revoke a licence, exclude specific licensable activities from the license, or modify operating conditions attaching to the licence,.

Complaints about anti-social behaviour associated with a licensed premises can be made directly to the Licensing Team.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health department is responsible for dealing with statutory nuisance from private housing and business premises, for example, shops, offices and factories. Statutory nuisance is something that is likely to cause injury to health or that interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of other people. These include:

- Unacceptable levels of noise.
- Build up of rubbish, animal faeces or waste material.
- Fumes, gases or offensive odours.
- Smoke from burning materials.
- Dogs barking for long periods of time.
- Vermin.

You must give your name and address when making a complaint, as anonymous complaints will not be dealt with; however, your identity will not be revealed and will be kept confidential during investigations.

On receiving a complaint an environmental health officer will arrange to investigate the problem and seek your cooperation, which is essential. You may be asked to keep a log of events and it is important that you do this accurately and truthfully as this may be used in evidence in court if legal proceedings become necessary.

On completion of the investigation you will be told of the result and of any further action that may be proposed. If a statutory nuisance is found to exist and the problem cannot be dealt with informally then this may lead to the issuing of an Abatement Notice. This notice will tell the perpetrator what must be done to resolve the problem and will specify a time for compliance. Failure to comply with an abatement notice can lead to enforcement action through the courts.

Housing

As well as being responsible for the Housing Register in Huntingdonshire and the Home Link (Choice Based Lettings scheme), the Housing department provides help and support in a number of areas that are linked to resolving anti-social behaviour, this includes:

- Advice on homelessness prevention.
- Supporting people in finding the right accommodation for their needs in the right area.
- Working in partnership with agencies such as housing associations and private landlords to help prevent anti-social behaviour.

Operations Division

There are a number of areas of anti-social behaviour that Operations deal directly with and they also have responsibility for open spaces and public areas that can sometimes be linked to anti-social behaviour problems. Operations Division responsibilities include:

- The removal of graffiti, litter and fly tipping, abandoned vehicles and needles.
- The maintenance of many public open spaces.
- The management of District Council parks facilities.

Operations will remove graffiti immediately if it is abusive or racial. Graffiti on public or charitable buildings will be removed free of charge; but there may be a charge for removal from private property. If they are unable to remove the graffiti they will be able to recommend service providers who can.

The removal of abandoned vehicles, as well as litter and fly tipping from public land can be arranged by contacting Operations Division on the number provided on the *Contact Details* sheet. In certain circumstances investigations will take place to identify the owners of the dumped waste which may lead to legal proceedings. Operations can also be contacted to arrange a bulky waste collection (fees and conditions are applicable) for removing large domestic items, such as white goods and furniture.

For the needle collection service – tel: 01480 434167 (24 Hours). It goes without saying that you should not touch the needle yourself.

Street Rangers

The District Council Street Rangers are part of the Operations Division. They provide a reassuring uniformed presence on local streets and in public spaces. The Street Rangers work closely with other local agencies to provide information that can help improve the quality of life for residents in Huntingdonshire.

Street Rangers help the community by:

- Looking out for and reporting neighbourhood nuisances such as graffiti, abandoned cars, litter, vandalism, fly tipping and dog fouling.
- Providing a visible presence.
- Helping keep streets, car parks and open spaces clean, tidy and well maintained.

How do Partnership agencies resolve anti-social behaviour?

Problems in a particular location or problems of an environmental nature might be referred to a working group, made up of relevant representatives from different agencies who will together look into suitable solutions. If, for example, the problem is groups of young people hanging around being noisy, creating litter and increasing fear that this may lead to vandalism, the group might consider providing youth workers to work with the young people or for more severe cases of disorder a Dispersal Order may be considered

If the anti-social behaviour is associated with one or more identifiable individuals then it is referred to the area Problem Solving Group. These Groups are made up of Partnership agencies and other relevant organisations that are able to assess and provide support in changing this behaviour. All matters pertaining to identified individuals are dealt with confidentially and sensitively. The Groups look at various options which could be used to change the behaviour. These may include:

- **Referral to appropriate agency** – for example, Social Care, Primary Care Trust, Connexions, etc.
- **Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC)** – This can be used generally in cases involving young people who have been identified as persistently behaving in an anti-social manner, such as acts of vandalism or intimidating behaviour. An ABC is a voluntary written agreement between the perpetrator and the relevant agency usually the Police and/or landlord. The contract will contain conditions that are relevant to the perpetrators behaviour.
- **Parental Control Agreement (PCA)** – This can be used in cases involving children under the age of 10 who repeatedly behave in an anti-social manner. It works in a similar way to an ABC and is voluntary. The child is not asked to sign anything, the parents or guardian sign and take responsibility for their child's behaviour. Sometimes, PCAs can be used in conjunction with an ABC for those over the age of 10.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs)** – These can be used to tackle anti-social behaviour and protect people from harassment. An ASBO can stop the perpetrator acting in an anti-social manner or can exclude that person from entering a defined area. It lasts for a minimum of two years. An ASBO is a civil order granted by the courts and in itself is not a criminal conviction. Breach of an ASBO is a criminal offence and will be dealt with by the police and can result in a fine or prison sentence.
- **Parenting Orders (PO)** – Certain agencies have the power to ask the courts to impose a Parenting Order to ensure parents comply with their responsibilities to their child. Such an order might include conditions to make sure their children attend school or that they themselves attend a parenting course. This is also a civil order, however, breaches may lead to a fine.
- **Mediation** – See the *Support - Mediation* section of this Guide.

- **Criminal proceedings** – If a criminal offence has been committed, the Police may charge the offender, which might result in court action. Criminal convictions may be used as additional evidence in Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and possession proceedings.
- **Injunction** – This is court order that can be obtained quickly with appropriate evidence, which requires someone to do or to stop doing something, for example, playing loud music or to clear their garden of rubbish. In serious cases of nuisance or harassment where there is threat of violence, the court can attach the power of arrest, so that if the problem continues the perpetrator can be arrested immediately.

Action restricted to RSLs (legal proceedings):

- **Possession Orders** – this process takes longer than injunctions and will normally involve evidence gathered over a period of time being presented to the court.
- **Demotion** – is a court order that results in the lowering of the security of a person's tenancy.
- **Eviction** – is the last resort and generally results from a breach of the above. If the Court grants an eviction of a tenant for anti-social behaviour then Huntingdonshire District council is not obligated to help re-house the evicted tenant.

Action restricted to the Police:

- **Dispersal Order** – A Dispersal Order can be used for areas where there is evidence of persistent anti-social behaviour. It gives the Police additional powers to direct anyone to leave the area and not come back for up to 24 hours. If people refuse to leave or if they come back before they should, they are liable to be arrested. Police may also, in certain circumstances, return home some-one under the age of 16.
- **Direction to Leave** – If Police believe that the presence of an individual over the age of 16 is likely to cause or contribute to alcohol-related crime or disorder then they can direct them to leave a locality for up to 48 hours.
- **Penalty notices** - A fixed penalty notice (FPN) and a penalty notice for disorder (PND) are one-off penalties which can be imposed for anti-social behaviour. FPNs are mostly given for low-level anti-social behaviour of an environmental nature, as well truancy. PNDs are given for more serious offences and disorderly behaviour that threatens other peoples' safety and well-being. Receiving a penalty notice does not count as getting a conviction and payment of the penalty does not amount to an admission of guilt.

Action restricted to Councils:

- **Designated Public Places Order** – Councils may designate areas where there is evidence of persistent anti-social behaviour caused by people drinking in public. Within such an area the Police have additional powers to seize alcohol from those over the age of 18, where they believe that the use of alcohol has caused or is likely to cause anti-social behaviour.

Other types of problem behaviour

Hate crime

Hate crime is where someone commits a crime against another person or victimises them because of their race, colour, faith, sexuality, gender or disability. Open Out is a local scheme, which uses a multi agency approach to resolving these incidents. The scheme offers:

- Alternatives means of reporting hate crime.
- Support to victims.
- Signposting and advice.
- Thorough and appropriate investigation of the case.
- Prosecution of offenders, where appropriate.

An Open Out reporting form is included in this pack.

When an incident is reported to the Open Out Co-ordinator it will be assessed, the nominated agency will contact you, commence an investigation and keep you informed about what action has been taken.

If you only want to report the incident and not have everything else done then your decision will be respected, and the incident will only be recorded for statistical purposes. Unless the incident is considered too serious for recording purposes, then you will be consulted for permission to have the incident investigated further.

Bullying

Bullying is a specific type of anti-social behaviour. In schools it will be addressed by the schools' anti-bullying policy. The school Head or Governing body should be made aware of incidents which happen on school premises or in school time, so they can decide on the best course of action. This should include working with the victims to give support, sanctions for perpetrators and reporting violence incidents to the police.

Community bullying takes place outside school and is also considered to be anti-social. This may be considered to be harassment, which is a criminal offence.

Further support can be found from Kidscape, whose details are given on the Contact Details sheet. School bullying can also be reported to the Office of Children and Young People's Service, and community bullying can be reported to Anti-social Behaviour Caseworkers or the Police.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse (which is also often referred to as domestic violence) is a specific type of behaviour, which can have a significant impact upon individuals in the family unit, including children and unborn babies. It also often impacts upon extended family members, neighbours and the wider community.

It is a criminal offence and is punishable by up to five years in prison. When sentencing for an offence courts can issue orders that can exclude someone from the home and surrounding area, or impose restraining orders.

If you are experiencing domestic violence or believe someone in your neighbourhood is then keep a record of incidents that you have witnessed or heard and any significant observations. Good evidence could secure a successful prosecution if matters are heard in a Court. You can report this to the domestic violence co-ordinator whose number is given on the Contact Details sheet contained in this pack.

RSLs can evict perpetrators thus allowing the victim to stay. If the property is privately rented the landlords can also have the perpetrator removed if he or she is in breach of their tenancy agreement.

Drug use and drug dealing

People dealing drugs or using them can have a significant impact on the community, leading to an increased fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

When drug use occurs in public, as well as being a crime, it can cause problems such as discarded needles and criminal activity such as stealing to support a drug habit.

In locations where drug dealing takes place residents are often intimidated by those suspected of dealing. There can also be a real impact on people's perception of the area, including concerns about levels of violence and personal safety and worries about property values.

If you suspect there is a problem with drug dealing or drug use in your area the most important thing to do is to report the problems, particularly to the Police. If agencies have accurate information about drug problems then there are many things that can be done to tackle drug related anti-social behaviour, which can include: targetting particular areas or individuals, issuing 'closure notices' that officially require a property where drug dealing has taken place to be closed up for a set period of time, improving locations to reduce the appeal of drug use hotspots (for example, removing 'dens'), rapid removal of drug litter, supporting those involved in drug use and educating people.

Huntingdonshire District Council operates a needle collection service – Tel: 01480 434167 (24 Hours). Please do not touch any needles yourself.

Support

Contact details for the services mentioned on this page can be found on the *Contact Details* sheet enclosed with this pack:

Mediation

Mediation is the use of a third party to help with communication and help people reach a no blame resolution to their differences. Mediation can succeed when other methods of resolving disputes have not worked or are not appropriate. However, mediation does require that all parties agree to participate. A wide variety of disputes are covered; often neighbourhood disputes including noise, pets, parties and boundary disputes. It is not considered appropriate in cases of domestic violence.

Cambridge and District Mediation Service is independent of our partner agencies and offers a confidential service in this area. You may be referred by one of the partner agencies, in which case the cost of the mediation may be covered.

You can also consider using an independent mediator. There is likely to be a charge for such a service.

Witness Service and Victim Support

Victim Support

Victim Support is the independent national charity which helps people cope with the effects of crime.. Amongst the services they offer are: someone to talk to in confidence, information on the police and court procedures, information on compensation and insurance matters and contact with other sources of help or intervention with other agencies on your behalf. Services are free and available to everyone.

Witness Service

The Witness Service gives information and support to witnesses, victims, their families and friends when they go to court. They can provide someone to accompany victims to court and give support whilst going through the court procedure, a chance to talk over the case when it has ended. If you are worried about going to court they can arrange for you to visit before the case, so that you are more familiar with the surroundings.

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Citizens Advice Bureau network is a registered charity. They provide independent, free, confidential and impartial advice to help people resolve their legal, money, consumer and other problems. CAB advice is available to everybody in the UK. The service relies on trained local volunteers of all ages and backgrounds.

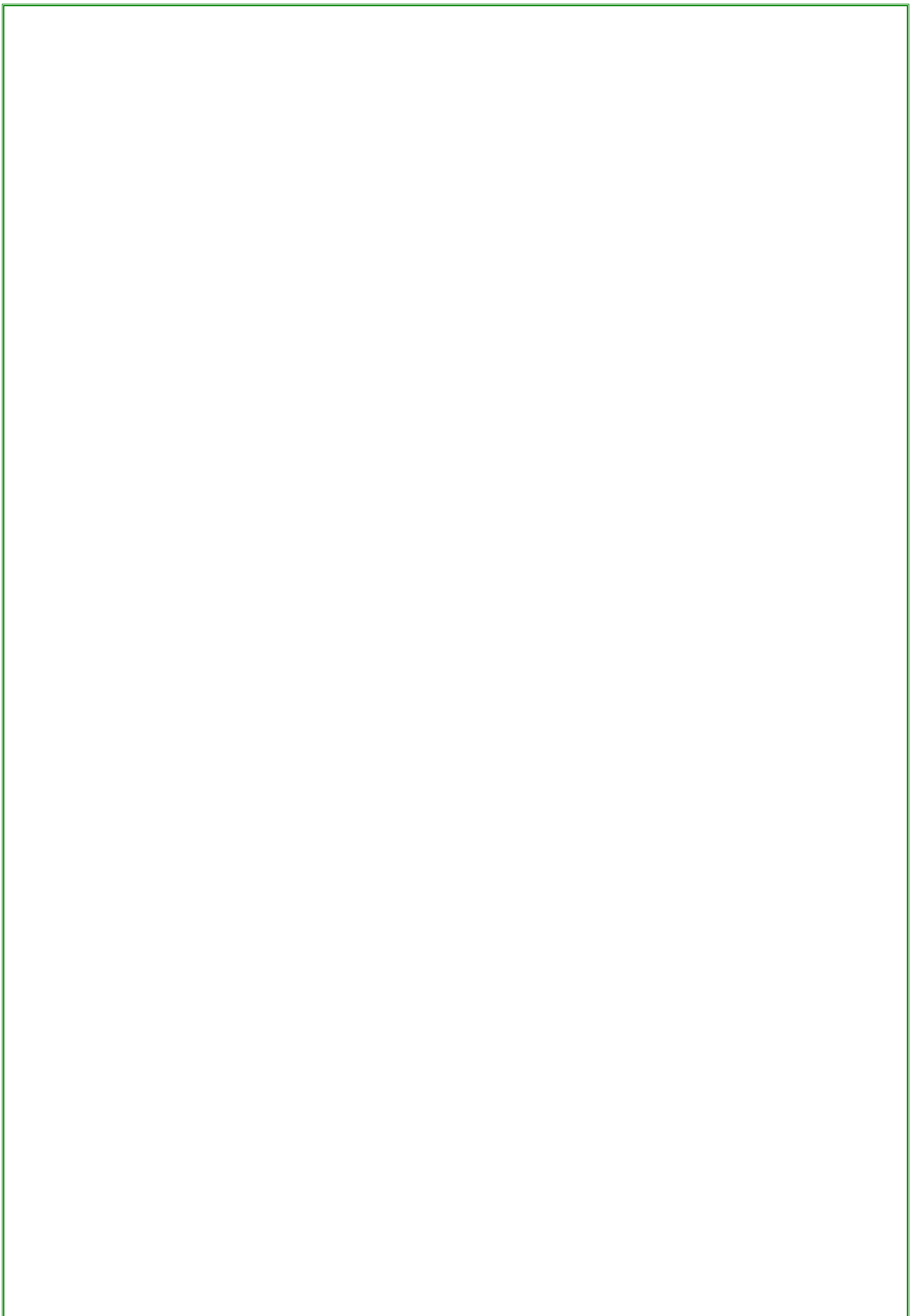
Using this booklet

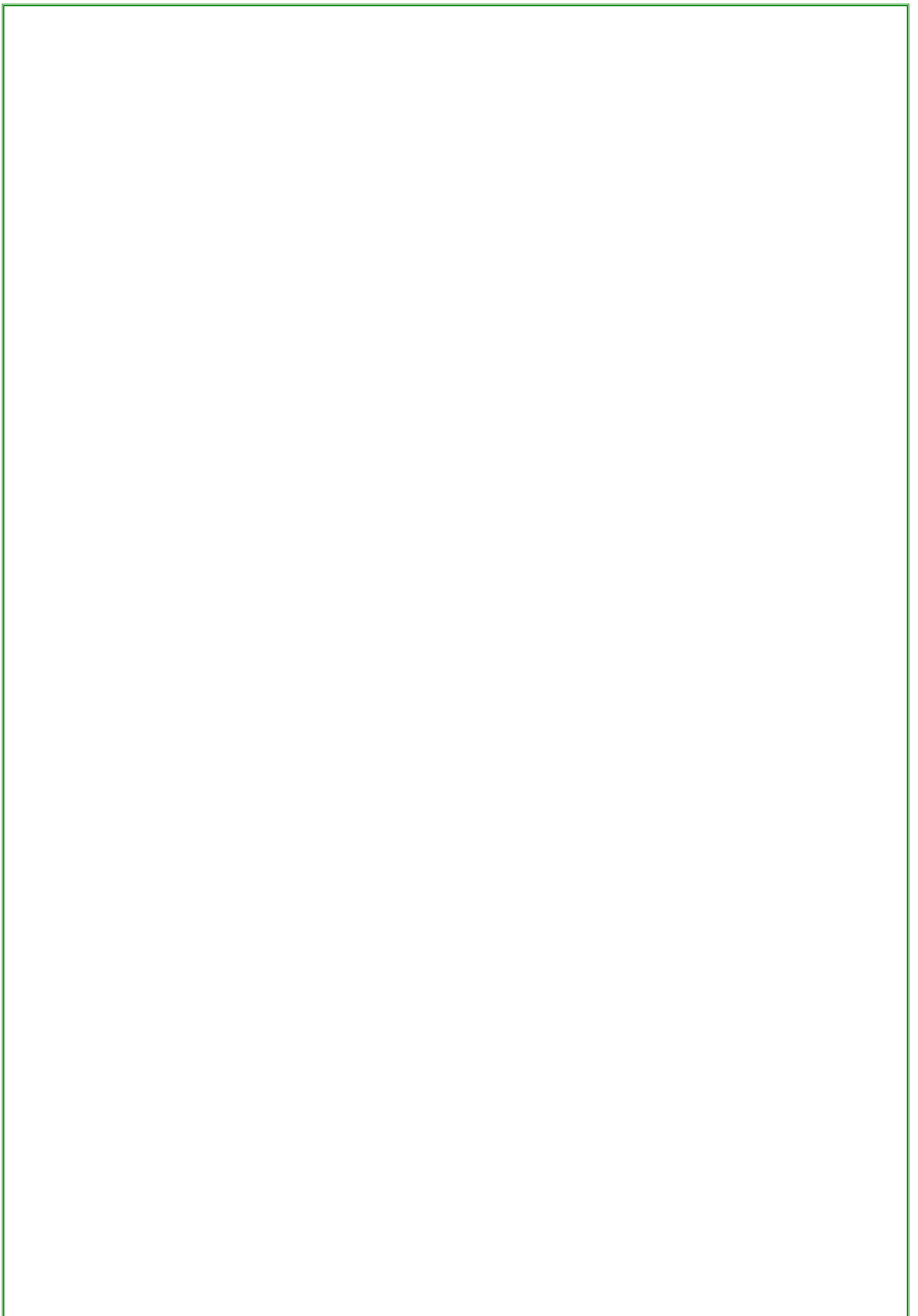
Anti-social Behaviour can affect anyone of us at any time. This booklet gives you the tools to tackle it.

If you need more help please do not hesitate to contact the relevant agencies listed in the Contact Details sheet contained in this pack. They will give advice and support in addressing the problems you are experiencing.

The agencies mentioned in this guide will normally treat all information as confidential and will not give personal details to a third party without your permission. Each agency will be happy to explain their confidentiality policy to you.

Notes





This document is produced by Huntingdonshire District Council on behalf of *Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership*



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