

*Anti-social behaviour orders: the basics*

	Magistrates' court – acting in their...		County court	Youth court
	...Civil capacity	...Criminal capacity		
Which ASBO?	No restrictions	Only on conviction in criminal proceedings	Pilots taking place for children and young people until September 2006	Only on conviction in criminal proceedings as it has no civil jurisdiction
Disposals available if ASBO breached – under-18s	n/a	n/a	n/a	Sections 90 and 91 cases – Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000, detention and training order, action plan order, referral order, attendance centre order, supervision order, reparation order, parenting order, fine, community punishment and rehabilitation order (16–17 year olds), absolute discharge  All sentences to the community are open to the following orders: curfew order, parenting order, drug testing and treatment order
Disposals available if ASBO breached – adult	Maximum five years' imprisonment; community order, absolute discharge, fine, compensation order, deferred sentence	Maximum five years' imprisonment; community order, absolute discharge, fine compensation order, deferred sentence	Maximum five years' imprisonment; community order, absolute discharge, fine, compensation order, deferred sentence	n/a

### Untouchable gang's reign of terror on a Merseyside street ends in the anti-social behaviour response courts

#### Issue

A gang of 10 youths who believed they were beyond the reach of the law were regularly terrorising vulnerable residents on a street in Thornton, Merseyside. The youths had been smashing windows, breaking into and throwing missiles at vehicles, and verbally abusing people. Victims included the young, elderly and vulnerable and the gang's behaviour created such fear locally that residents would not go out after dark or leave their properties unattended. Many of them installed CCTV. Only the most serious incidents were reported at the time they occurred but victims would not press charges for fear of being singled out and targeted by the gang.

#### Approach

The neighbourhood police officer carried out a detailed investigation of the problem to bring a case for arresting the perpetrators and bringing them before the courts. Previous police logs and reports were scrutinised and impact statements taken from the majority of witnesses in anonymity to use as hearsay evidence. One family, which had been singled out by the perpetrators, was given support by the police with daily contact and visits. The victims installed CCTV and kept a diary of all the incidents which was exhibited as evidence.

The police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) worked closely together to prepare the case and the police gathered strong evidence. Interviews with perpetrators were carefully planned so that when faced with