

## 4. Time limits

### Magistrates' courts (acting in their civil capacity)

Under section 127 of the Magistrates' Court Act 1980, a complaint must be made within six months of the time when the matter of the complaint (the behaviour) arose. One incidence of serious anti-social behaviour may be sufficient for an order to be made. Earlier incidents may be used as background information to support a case and show a pattern of behaviour. As long as the complaint is made within the six-month timeframe, a summons may be served outside this time period, although delay is not encouraged.