

RESTRICTED (when complete)

MG11T

Witness Statement

Criminal Procedures Rules, R27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, S.9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, S.5B

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Statement of

Age if under 18 **Over 18** (if over 18 insert 'over 18') **Occupation** Police Constable 14156

This statement (consisting of 5 pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Signature: _____

Date: 11/12/15

Cross if witness evidence is visually recorded (supply witness details on rear)

I am a Police Constable serving with Derbyshire Constabulary currently based at Shirebrook Police station.

I have worked in the Shirebrook area for the past five and a half years mainly as a response officer. In January 2014 I joined Shirebrook Safer Neighbourhood team working alongside PCSO _____ and PCSO _____ covering the villages of Shirebrook, Langwith, Whaley Thornes and Scarcliffe.

In my time working at Shirebrook I have attended numerous reports of anti-social behaviour within the Whaley Thornes area of the Bolsover District.

Whaley Thornes is a small village on the outskirts of Derbyshire, the village borders on to Nottinghamshire village of Nether Langwith. The village has a number of shops the main ones being the Post office on Main Street Whaley Thornes and Snappa Bargain which is situated on the corner of Main Street and New Scott Street. Adjacent to Snappa Bargain is a small Doctors surgery and next to that is a skate park all which back on to the cricket pavilion and field. Surrounding this location are two care homes one for elderly people and one for people with mental health problems. Around this location at the centre of the village there are three main streets situated on the crossroads of this junction these being Main Street, New Scott Street and Jellico Street. Surrounding these streets are a number of other residential streets containing mainly terrace housing.

Within the past 24months or so there has been an increase in anti-social behaviour caused by adults and juveniles in this area mainly in relation them being intoxicated and having intoxicants in their possession and being ant-social at the time. The majority of the problems have been at the front of

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Snappa Bargain on the cross roads however this has been wide spread and has led to reports being made from neighbouring streets.

Despite a firm but fair manner in which police have tried to deal with this matter people found causing such a nuisance appear to feel they are above the law and although they are moved on they continue their antics elsewhere. This became most apparent following the safer neighbourhood team putting notice up in relation to the authorisation to exercise Police Dispersal Powers. In recent months the Dispersal power has been authorised by following the ongoing problems in the area. Upon notice being put up around the village local people had taken to studying the map to ascertain here they could continue their antics without being bothered by the police and openly asked officers where they could go out of the dispersal zone. Many of the individuals took to leaving the area of the dispersal and returned to cause problems upon the conclusion of the authorisation. Although this is the case for the majority the power has still been utilised effectively to disperse groups on each weekend it was authorised. The weekend where the dispersal power was authorised where 5th June 2015 at 1700hr to 7th June 2015 at 1700hrs, 1st May 2015 at 1900hrs until 3rd May 2015 at 1900hrs and the 24th April 2015 at 1600hrs until 26th April 2015 at 1600hrs.

There have been a number of incidents where damage has been caused to the surrounding shops where graffiti has been done on the front of Snappa Bargain which is in fact a charity shop and also the shop which was next door Made in Langwith. Both shops have had their manhole covers to their drains lifted on a number of occasions and filled with rubbish. Both shops also had their facia signs damaged and due to having to keep maintaining them have now decided not to repair these again.

The ant-social behaviour had got that bad that in January 2015 led to the business known as Made in Langwith which was the shop next to Snappa Baragin to close down. The owner and workers at the sandwich shop had become victim to nuisance behaviour from local people and had on a number of occasions become intimidated by adults who congregate on this corner. The occupiers of the shop finally provided statements to police but due to intimidation and fear of retribution refused to attend court when this went to trial.

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Snappa Bargain is a community funding charity shop and cafe which is run by two voluntary managers and a number of voluntary staff. The shop raises money for the local community and this is distributed out when a decision has been made as to what this will fund annually by the local community. After years of the voluntary managers at Snappa Bargain been subject to the group hanging around on the corner they have within the last month closed the shop down and have moved the café to another location to enable elderly residents somewhere to go during the day instead of attending this location where they are intimidated by the gangs.

A number of years ago when these problems began the Doctors surgery became under attack from local people causing antisocial behaviour which resulted in windows getting smashed. Due to this the Doctors surgery now has metal grills on the windows and doors to prevent them from being smashed. Staff at the doctors surgery will only leave as a group at night due to fear of the anti-social behaviour from the individuals who congregate outside drinking. Patients who are from neighbouring villages attending the surgery also report they will park as close to the building as possible to prevent them having to encounter the groups hanging around.

Next to the Doctors surgery there is a hard standing to play football with metal nets and a skate park. These were paid for by the Parish council along with fundraising by local people to have this built. Due to the damage caused to the lighting on these areas they can no longer be used in an evening as they are damaged the instance they are repaired despite efforts by the councils to toughen them to prevent this. Youths who are not involved with the anti-social activities have also stopped playing on the skate parks due to the ones causing the problems having smashed glass on them both which on at least on occasion resulted in the injury of a child.

Since January 2015 until 11th December 2015 there have been 238 calls for service in relation to Anti-social behaviour in Whaley Thornes all relating to gangs male and female gathering on the street corners drinking alcohol, shouting, swearing and being intimidated. In addition to these complaints we have received complaints about people gathering around the bin on the corner of Jellico Street, Main Street utilising the bin as a bar to put there alcohol on and on the odd occasion that this is being used to take drugs. We have also had complaints of stones being thrown at windows and smashed. Most

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recently have had concerns raised about young mothers changing baby's nappies on the top of the bin on the corner. Despite there being a hard standing to play football on and a skate park adjacent to where they youths and adults stand there have also been a number of complains about people playing ball games in the middle of the street around residents addresses and vehicles.

There have also been reports of homophobic and racial incidents over the past 12 months which in some instances have become so bad that it has resulted in families leaving the village. Although on some occasions complaints and victims would support a prosecution it has not always been possible to bring about a prosecution as the individuals involved could not be identified from the large groups.

Nonetheless despite the 238 calls people will still on occasions refuse to provide details or refuse to support a prosecution by providing a statement due to fear of ramifications.

Over time there have been a number of events which have been organised by the youth workers which have included groups on a Friday night where they set up a number of different activities for the groups to engage in. Extreme wheels are another organised event by the Council has set on to engage with the youths in the area. As stated before there is also a skate park, hard standing to play football and also a play park at the opposite end of the cricket field. However these activities only engage with the youths and they are not the only individuals engaging in this ASB as adults are the main perpetrators for the late night drinking on the street corners.

There have been a small minority who have been dealt with by Police who have had intensive engagement with youth workers and the youth offending team which has resulted in these individuals no longer being part of the Anti-social behaviour. However there is still a large group of individuals who have failed to engage and have continued with their antics. A number of individuals who come to the fore front where requested to attend Shirebrook police station during which they were requested to abide by conditions placed upon them via an Anti-Social Behaviour Contract (ABC). The purpose of the ABC is designed as an early intervention at a low level to prevent Young people committing ASB. This was even utilised in an attempt to evidence the good behaviour and co-operation with police and council of one of the adults in the group due to her having previously being on an ASBO and being unable to get

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permanent accommodation to prevent her from continuing with her anti-social activity. Despite efforts by the Police and Council to help these individuals, all have failed to engage to such a degree that they are no longer causing problems for local residents.

Attempts were also made by Police and ASRA housing which is the housing association which runs a large proportion of addresses to engage with the tenants of their properties. A number of the tenants where issued warnings in relation to their involvement in Anti-Social behaviour and due to ongoing problems in and around the flats situated on New Scott Street Whaley Thornes they have put out to tender to companies to install CCTV on their flats.

In an attempt to combat the issues of anti-social behaviour in Whaley Thornes Langwith Police and Community Safety Partnership and Bolsover District council are working together to pursue the implementation of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) as a viable way of dealing with issues which are affecting peoples quality of life in this area.

The majority of public in the Whaley Thornes Langwith area are good people and are been adversely affected by the actions of a few individuals having to tolerate the actions due to them fearing reprisals they need support by Police and Local authorities to restore peace to their area.

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