



Multi-Agency action to reduce anti-social behaviour at Station Square, Bognor Regis

Introduction

This paper has been prepared to provide information about issues of anti-social behaviour taking place at “Station Square” and update you on the action being taken by a range of agencies and organisations to help reduce the problem.

What is anti social behaviour?

The legal definition of Antisocial behaviour is 'behaviour by a person which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to persons not of the same household as the person' (*Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003 and Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011*).

Within this broad definition, the Home Office has identified categories of behaviour that are widely accepted to be anti-social by both practitioners and the public. The categories are divided into four core areas according to whether they occur in a public space, whether they have a direct or indirect victim and whether the behaviour impacts on the environment. Examples are provided of specific activities which could fall into each category.

CATEGORY OF ASB	EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITY
Misuse of public space	Taking drugs, presence of dealers or users, street drinking, begging, illegally parked vehicles, cycling / skating / scooting in pedestrianised areas
Disregard for community	Rowdy behaviour, such as shouting and swearing, fighting, drunken behaviour, hooliganism / loutish behaviour. Nuisance behaviour, such as urinating in public and misuse of air guns
Acts directed at people	Intimidation and harassment, such as groups or individuals making threats, verbal abuse, bullying people, pestering people, menacing gestures, which can also be on the grounds of race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability and age.
Environmental damage	Criminal damage / vandalism, such as graffiti, damage to street furniture, damage to trees / plants / hedges and Litter / rubbish

What's being done to address ASB Issues at Station Square?

In Bognor Regis, multiple agencies, departments and organisations have responsibilities for, or an interest in, reducing ASB at Station Square. As the land is actually privately owned, this makes things more complicated than other areas of the town.

A multi-agency meeting took place at Station Square on 8th July 2022, with all attendees committed to working collaboratively to share information and identify a focused course of action to help improve the situation. Since then, a lot of work has been undertaken by all partners to deliver those actions.

The following information sets out key facts about who's involved, what their responsibilities are, and what's been and continues to be done to improve the situation.

The Law on Street Drinking

In the UK, it is **not** an offence to drink alcohol in public spaces. Because of that, no agency has the power to introduce or enforce a complete ban on alcohol in an area.

What councils *can* do is create an area within which officers have the power to confiscate alcohol under certain conditions. This defined area is known as a "Public Spaces Protection Order" (PSPO). The PSPO restricts the consumption of alcohol in a public space **where it is associated with anti-social behaviour**. It is an offence to fail to comply with a request to stop drinking or to surrender alcohol in a controlled drinking area.

The area we're calling "Station Square" is part of the wider PSPO that covers Bognor Regis. The Police and Community Wardens have the power to confiscate alcohol from people who are also carrying out anti-social behaviour.

The Police have *additional* powers to disperse individuals that are engaged in anti-social behaviour where alcohol is a factor. It is an offence for someone not to comply with a direction to leave an area.

Source: House Of Commons Briefing papers SN05117: Published Thursday, April 20, 2017

Land ownership:

The station building, car park area and bike store to the sides, plus land to the front that we're calling "Station Square" is all owned by National Rail. It's private land, not public realm, and Railway Byelaws apply to the whole area. Railway Byelaws do not allow for an outright ban on the consumption of alcohol.

Policing and enforcement:

British Transport Police:

The land to the side and front of the station (which we're calling "Station Square") is owned by Network Rail, which means it falls under British Transport Police's responsibilities. However, because of their quicker response time, it's been confirmed that, with regards to policing, any immediate crimes can also be dealt with by Sussex Police as first responders in the first instance. Both Sussex Police and British Transport Police are able to issue Community Protection Warnings.

British Transport Police have an officer who acts as the "Specific Point of Contact" (SPOC) for Bognor Regis. This officer is connected with all parties trying to tackle ASB issues at Station Square, including Sussex Police, Arun District Council's ASB Team and the BID's Business Crime Reduction Partnership.

British Transport Police carried out joint working operations with partners in March 2022 and June 2022, in addition to proactive patrols on the network over the last year. British Transport Police have worked closely with Sussex Police on a special operation addressing issues with young people using the rail network to create problems along the south coast, including Bognor Regis.

Where incidents are flagged as taking place on Network Rail land, British Transport Police are sent the crime reports logged on Sussex Police's crime system.

A gap was identified whereby British Transport Police weren't aware of the daily reports of anti-social behaviour being logged by businesses based in and around that area on non-Police systems. This is because there is currently no data sharing agreement between the BR BID and British Transport Police. That's now been resolved by officers at British Transport Police joining the BID's Business Crime Reduction Partnership and having access to specific areas of the partnership's reporting app, DISC. They also receive the Community Warden's daily patrol reports of Station Square by email the moment they're submitted on DISC so they have a "live" picture of the situation throughout the day.

British Transport Police are reaching out to the BTP Designing Out Crime Team for any recommendations of simple initiatives that could be introduced there.

Sussex Police:

Sussex Police's Arun Neighbourhood Policing Team have rostered twice daily patrols of hotspot areas, including Station Square. As part of their patrols, Officers engage with individuals and groups gathered in the area, taking any necessary appropriate action. Officers also engage with businesses in and around the area, making sure everyone understands and adheres to their licencing responsibilities. Between September and October 2022, over 100 hours of tasked Officer hours were delivered in and around the Station Square area.

Southern Rail Enforcement Team:

The Southern Rail Enforcement Team engage with both British Transport Police and the communities that the network serves in collaborative ways in order to make the network safe and secure for staff and passengers.

Both ADC Wellbeing & Communities and British Transport Police have made Southern Rail's Enforcement Team aware of the issues taking place in and around Bognor Regis Train Station, and there is now a direct connection with the Community Warden.

Members of British Transport Police and the Southern Rail Enforcement Team met with Sussex Police for a site visit at Station Square on the 13th October.

Other Agencies / Departments involved with Station Square

- Arun District Council (ADC)
- Bognor Regis Business Improvement District (BR BID)
- Bognor Regis Town Council (BRTC)

ADC Wellbeing and Communities: ASB Team

Members of Arun District Council's ASB Team are based at Bognor Regis Police Station and work really closely with the Neighbourhood Policing Team, including joint visits and patrols of Station Square.

In August 2022 the ASB Team created a letter, translated into multiple languages, which has been hand delivered to people in groups gathering in Station Square, setting out expectations in terms of how the space is used.

The ASB Team continues to respond to reports of ASB taking place at Station Square and take the necessary action within their powers. This includes issuing Community Protection Warnings, Community Protection Notices and Criminal Behaviour Orders.

ADC Cleansing:

As the land to the front of the Train Station is privately owned by Network Rail, it is not part of the "public realm". As such, it is not the direct responsibility of ADC to maintain. However, Arun District Council are contracted to provide cleansing services to Network Rail, which is why you see the same teams working in that area as you do in the public realm.

In response to reports of littering at this location, additional (temporary) 240l bins have been provided at Station Square, and these are emptied daily. ADC Cleansing have also increased the number of patrols by the Civil Enforcement Officers who have the powers to issue fines for littering.

ADC Cleansing are *not* responsible for any litter left in the raised planters – this falls to ADC Parks and Greenspace as part of *their* contract with Network Rail to plant and maintain the green areas.

ADC Parks & Greenspace:

The planters at Station Square are privately owned by Network Rail, so again, not "public realm". However, Arun District Council's Parks & Greenspace are contracted to provide planting and maintenance services on behalf of Network Rail. That's why you see the same teams working in that area as you do in the public realm.

As a result of feedback from the multi-agency group, ADC's Parks & Greenspace thinned out the vegetation in the planters to "open up" the area and increase visibility in August 2022. This

immediately improved perceptions of safety for people using the area, and improved sight lines for the existing Sussex Police CCTV camera. Following the reduction in vegetation height, it's been agreed that no additional CCTV needs to be installed. A new planting scheme is being created by Parks & Greenspace (with input from BRTC's Bognor in Bloom Committee), focused on low level planting.

Under their contract with Network Rail, ADC Parks & Greenspace are responsible for clearing any litter in the raised planters.

ADC Licensing:

ADC Licensing are responsible for issuing licences for the sale of alcohol to retailers in and around Station Square. Both ADC Licensing and Sussex Police are continuing to conduct licensing checks on licensed premises surrounding Station Square.

If you suspect shops are selling to any within this group while they are under the influence, you can report them directly to ADC Licensing – you'll find details in the "How to Report" section at the end.

ADC Property & Estates:

ADC Property & Estates will be reinstating 4 x A3 Public Safety Protection Order (PSPO) signs at Station Square. The signs remind people that alcohol will be confiscated from anyone carrying out anti-social behaviour within the defined PSPO area. By itself, drinking alcohol in public places is not against the law in England.

ADC Parking:

The recessed "drop off bay" on Station Road at the front of the station is the responsibility of WSCC Highways. They contract Arun District Council (Parking) to issue tickets and enforce parking fines, and deliver certain works to the surface, such as repairing yellow lines.

Even though there are double yellow lines marked around the bay, loading and unloading (such as loading and unloading luggage without waiting) is permitted, providing you can be seen doing so continuously. Blue Badge holders are also allowed to park on double yellow lines for up to three hours.

ADC's Civil Enforcement Officers will continue to patrol Station Road regularly, issuing tickets which lead to fines for vehicles that are parked illegally.

ADC Housing:

It's really important to make a distinction between rough sleeping and anti-social behaviour, and details about rough sleeping are included here only to raise awareness.

Rough sleeping is defined as people sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments); people living in buildings or other places not designed for habitation. Rough sleeping is not a crime.

ADC's Housing Department includes the Rough Sleeping Team, who continue to follow up on reports of rough sleeping and engage with rough sleepers basing themselves in and around Station Square.

You'll find details of how to alert ADC's specialist team to the presence of rough sleepers in the "How to Report" section at the end.

Bognor Regis Business Improvement District (BID):

Since September 2018 the BID, with funding support from BRTC, has provided a five day per week Community Warden service. The Warden patrols and responds to reports of incidents at Station Square.

The BID secured funding to increase this warden provision to a 7 day per week service, with a specific focus on helping reduce ASB in key locations, including Station Square. The new permanent postholder started in late September and is making regular patrols of known ASB hotspots, including Station Square. Details of their patrol are recorded and emailed directly to Neighbourhood Police Team Officers at Sussex Police, dedicated officers at British Transport Police and ADC's Anti-Social Behaviour Team. This means everyone that needs to be aware of what's going on in the space there is being kept up to date at multiple points during the day.

A lot of work has gone into reconfiguring the BCRP's reporting app, DISC so that all incidents and intelligence about Station Square can be shared with the right people and agencies quickly and easily.

The BR BID Co Ordinator (COO) developed and produced this document, collating all of the information about ASB issues in Station Square in one place. Through their role, the BID COO will continue to report business concerns, to share information, develop initiatives and work purposefully with all agencies involved to help reduce anti-social behaviour at Station Square.

Bognor Regis Town Council:

Bognor Regis Town Council have supported the provision of a Community Warden in and around the town centre since 2018. While unrelated to ASB, BRTC's Town Force Team provide and maintain the planters at Station Square.

How to report issues

It's vital that any anti-social behaviour issues you're concerned about at Station Square are reported to the right agencies, in the right way, as quickly as possible, so they can take appropriate action.

The following reporting information applies to all areas of Bognor Regis, not just Station Square:

Type of issue	Who to report to	How	DISC Users
Any ASB that's a risk of threat or harm	Sussex Police	Telephone 999	Telephone 999
Any ASB related to drug use or drug dealing but not direct risk of threat or harm	Sussex Police	Telephone 101 OR 101 online	Incident report / ASB Area: **Station Square** Premises: **Station Square – ASB**
Littering	ADC Cleaning	Email: cleansing@arun.gov.uk	Public Realm / littering
Reporting shops selling alcohol to people that are already intoxicated	ADC Licensing	Email: licensing@arun.gov.uk	Public Realm / licensing
If you're concerned about someone you have seen sleeping rough	ADC Housing (via Streetlink)	24 hour telephone helpline: 0300 500 0914 OR https://www.streetlink.org.uk/	Preferably Via Streetlink OR DISC Public Realm / Rough Sleeper location report

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