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### **asb4 secures eviction**

A groundbreaking mediation and anti-social behaviour service is celebrating its second birthday after wrapping up its 87th case in Coventry and Warwickshire.

Jamie Brookes, of Hillman House, Corporation Street, was sentenced to 22 days imprisonment at Coventry County Court yesterday after breaching an injunction gained by Whitefriars Housing Group Ltd earlier this year.

The injunction prevented the 20-year-old from using or threatening to use violence against any resident in the block, causing or encouraging damage to Hillman House and threatening to cause or causing a nuisance to any neighbours.

Whitefriars sought the full injunction at Coventry County Court following ongoing anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance. When it was breached earlier this week, Whitefriars headed back to court where Mr Brookes received his sentence.

Mr Brookes will be officially evicted from his property on September 15. Whitefriars has also secured powers from the court which prevent him returning to the block. An exclusion zone has been agreed to prevent local people suffering further incidents.

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asb4 business manager Gail Cooper said: “We are delighted at the court’s decision. It is an excellent result for the community and we are very pleased to have been able to respond with such tough action to residents’ complaints.

“The decision to take legal action is never taken lightly, but in the case of persistent anti-social behaviour it became the only option available to ensure other residents could enjoy their home in peace.

“I want to thank all the residents who helped us secure this result. Their evidence gave us the strength to go to court, and we very much appreciate their work for the benefit of the entire community.

“The message to other residents is that if you are suffering, let us know. Together we can work to end anti-social behaviour in Coventry.”

asb4 set to work in 2004 to crackdown on anti-social behaviour, stamp out noise nuisance and help resolve neighbourhood disputes.

Last year the team, which is employed by Whitefriars Housing Group Ltd, has helped out with around 100 mediation cases and helped gather evidence of anti-social behaviour via CCTV in many cases. The team have also secured a number of legal orders where they have had sufficient evidence such as the injunction obtained against Jamie Brookes.

One happy client is Coventry-based Touchstone Heart Ltd Housing Association.

Hugh Gaster, regional housing manager at Touchstone Heart Ltd, said: “Dealing with anti -social behaviour requires specialist knowledge and is often very resource intensive. asb4 has managed some very difficult cases on our behalf and has obtained excellent results.

“asb4 has also supported our housing officers in dealing with some difficult and sometimes overwhelming cases that have ended in civil court action.

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“By working with asb4, housing staff feel more confident and have gained experience in dealing with anti-social behaviour. This has proven to be of great benefit to our organisation and we look forward to continuing to work with asb4 in the future.”

asb4 is the only ‘one-stop shop’ for anti-social behaviour services and remedies in the area. Local organisations it helps include Rugby Borough Council, South Warwickshire Housing Trust, Touchstone Heart and Focus Heart Housing Association.

asb4 offers a full menu of resolution services ranging from mediation through to emergency injunctions and committal proceedings. Its aim is to allow residents to enjoy their homes in peace.

Gail Cooper said: “Anti-social behaviour destroys lives and shatters communities. If left unchecked, it can lead to neighbourhood decline with people moving away and residents abandoning their homes.

“Positive action taken at the appropriate time prevents and avoids social exclusion, saves housing staff time and effort, maintains tenancies and protects communities.”

Speaking after the court case a resident of Hillman House said: “I wish to pass on my sincere thanks to Whitefriars’ asb4 team for its support and dedication which resulted in residents in Hillman House having their quality of life back.

“asb4 was committed to resolving the anti-social behaviour problems in the block and has obtained a great result. The asb4 officers involved in the case were a great support to me throughout the case and gave me reassurance all the way through the court process.

“I hope this will give other residents the confidence to report anti-social behaviour to Whitefriars, because by working together the right results can be achieved.”

**Ends**

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