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Changes to legislation: Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, Cross Heading: Offences of annoying, offensive, obstructive or dangerous behaviour is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 03 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)



Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982

1982 CHAPTER 45

PART IV

OFFENCES, POWERS OF CONSTABLES, ETC.

Offences of annoying, offensive, obstructive or dangerous behaviour

46 Soliciting and importuning by prostitutes.

- (1) A prostitute (whether male or female) who for the purposes of prostitution—
- (a) loiters in a public place;
 - (b) solicits in a public place or in any other place so as to be seen from a public place; or
 - (c) importunes any person who is in a public place,
- shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F1}level 2 on the standard scale].
- (2) In subsection (1) above, “public place” has the same meaning as in section 133 of this Act but includes—
- (a) any place to which at the material time the public are permitted to have access, whether on payment or otherwise; and
 - (b) any public conveyance other than a taxi or hire car within the meaning of section 23 of this Act.

Textual Amendments

F1 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\)](#), [s. 289G](#)

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47 Urinating etc.

Any person who urinates or defecates in such circumstances as to cause, or to be likely to cause, annoyance to any other person shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F2}level 2 on the standard scale].

Textual Amendments

F2 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\)](#), **s. 289G**

48 Dogs: fouling of pavements.

(1) Subject to subsection (2) and (3) below, any person in charge of a dog who allows it to deposit its excrement upon—

- (a) a footpath or footway;
- (b) a grass verge maintained by a local authority and situated adjacent to a footpath or footway;
- (c) a pedestrian precinct maintained by a local authority;
- (d) any place maintained by a local authority and used exclusively as a children's play area; or
- (e) any place maintained by a local authority and used for recreational or sporting purposes being a place in relation to which this section applies by virtue of subsection (2) below,

shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F3}level 2 on the standard scale].

(2) This section applies in relation to a place, being a place referred to in subsection (1) (e) above, only if a notice stating that this section applies to it and the effect of such application is displayed at the entrance to that place or elsewhere so that it may be seen by members of the public intending to have access to the place.

(3) This section shall not apply to a blind person in charge of a dog kept and used solely for his guidance or to a stockperson in charge of a working dog being used for driving livestock.

(4) In this section “footpath” and “footway” have the [^{F4}same meanings as in the [Roads \(Scotland\) Act 1984](#)].

Textual Amendments

F3 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\)](#), **s. 289G**

F4 Words substituted by [Roads \(Scotland\) Act 1984 \(c. 54, SIF 108\)](#), s. 156(1), **Sch. 9 para. 87(3)**

49 Dangerous and annoying creatures.

(1) Any person who suffers or permits any creature in his charge to cause danger or injury to any other person who is in a public place or to give such person reasonable cause for alarm or annoyance shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F5}level 2 on the standard scale].

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- (2) A district court may, if satisfied that any creature kept in the vicinity of any place where a person resides is giving that person, while in that place, reasonable cause for annoyance, make an order requiring the person keeping the creature to take, within such period as may be specified in the order, such steps (short of destruction of the creature) to prevent the continuance of the annoyance as may be so specified.
- (3) An application to a district court for an order under subsection (2) above may be made by any person.
- (4) Any person who fails to comply with an order under subsection (2) above shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F5}level 3 on the standard scale].
- (5) The fact that there is a licence under the ^{M1}Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 in respect of a creature shall not of itself afford a defence in proceedings under this section relating to that creature.
- (6) Where a court convicts a person of an offence under this section or discharges him absolutely or makes a probation order in relation to him, it may, whether or not (in the case of conviction) it imposes a penalty under subsection (1) or (4) above—
 - (a) subject to subsection (8) below, make such order as it sees fit as to the disposal of the creature to which the proceedings relate;
 - (b) authorise a constable, in pursuance of such an order, to take possession of the creature.
- (7) An order under subsection (6) above may, subject to any enactment relating to the protection or conservation of living things, be for the destruction of the creature to which it relates.
- (8) No creature disposed of under an order under subsection (6) above shall be given or sold for the purposes of vivisection.

Textual Amendments

F5 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\)](#), s. 289G

Marginal Citations

M1 1976 c. 38.

50 Drunkenness.

- (1) Any person who, while not in the care or protection of a suitable person, is, in a public place, drunk and incapable of taking care of himself shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F6}level 2 on the standard scale].
- (2) Any person who is drunk in a public place while in charge of a child under the age of 10 shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F6}level 2 on the standard scale].
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (2) above, if a child appears to the court to be under the age of 10, the child shall be deemed to be under that age unless the contrary is proved.

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- (4) A constable may arrest a person for contravening subsection (2) above if he has reasonable cause to believe that the child in the charge of that person is under the age of 10.
- (5) Any person who is drunk in a public place while in possession of a firearm (including a crossbow, airgun, air rifle or air pistol) shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F6}level 2 on the standard scale].
- (6) In this section, “public place” has the same meaning as in section 133 of this Act but includes—
 - (a) any place to which at the material time the public are permitted to have access, whether on payment or otherwise; and
 - (b) any public conveyance other than a taxi or hire car within the meaning of section 23 of this Act.

Textual Amendments
F6 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\), s. 289G](#)

51 Obscene material.

- (1) Subject to subsection (4) below, any person who displays any obscene material in any public place or in any other place where it can be seen by the public shall be guilty of an offence under this section.
- (2) Subject to subsection (4) below, any person who publishes, sells or distributes or, with a view to its eventual sale or distribution, makes, prints, has or keeps any obscene material shall be guilty of an offence under this section.
- [^{F7}(2A) Subject to subsection (4) below, any person who—
 - (a) is responsible for the inclusion of any obscene material in a programme included in a programme service; or
 - (b) with a view to its eventual inclusion in a programme so included, makes, prints, has or keeps any obscene material,
 shall be guilty of an offence under this section.]
- (3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the prescribed sum or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding 3 months or to both or, on conviction on indictment, to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years or to both.
- (4) A person shall not be convicted of an offence under this section if he proves that he had used all due diligence to avoid committing the offence.
- (5) Under an indictment for or on a complaint of a breach of subsection (1) above, the court may, if satisfied that the person accused is guilty of an offence under section 1(1) of the ^{M2}Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981 (offence of public display of indecent matter), convict him of a breach of the said section 1(1).
- (6) Nothing in this section applies in relation to any matter—
 - (a)^{F8}
 - (b) included in a performance of a play (within the meaning of the ^{M3}Theatres Act 1968).

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(7) For section 5(4)(b) of the Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981 (saving) there shall be substituted the following—

“(b) section 51 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.”

(8) In this section—

“material” includes any book, magazine, bill, paper, print, film, tape, disc or other kind of recording (whether of sound or visual images or both), photograph, drawing, painting, representation, model or figure . . . ^{F9};

“photograph” includes the negative as well as the positive version;

“public place” has the same meaning as in section 133 of this Act except that it includes any place to which at the material time the public are permitted to have access, whether on payment or otherwise;

“prescribed sum” has the same meaning as in section 289B of the ^{M4}Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1975;

[^{F10} “programme” and “programme service” have the same meaning as in the Broadcasting Act 1990;]

and the reference to publishing includes a reference to . . . ^{F11} playing, projecting or otherwise reproducing.

Textual Amendments

F7 S. 51(2A) inserted by Broadcasting Act 1990 (c. 42, SIF 96), ss. 4(6), 87(6), 163(2)

F8 S. 51(6)(a) repealed by Broadcasting Act 1990 (c. 42, SIF 96), ss. 163(3), 203(3), Sch. 21 (with ss. 4(6), 87(6), Sch. 12 Pt. II para. 1)

F9 Words added by Cable and Broadcasting Act 1984 (c. 46, SIF 96), s. 26(b) and repealed by Broadcasting Act 1990 (c. 42, SIF 96), ss. 163(4)(a), 203(3), Sch. 21 (with ss. 4(6), 87(6), Sch. 12 Pt. II para. 1)

F10 Definitions inserted by Broadcasting Act 1990 (c. 42, SIF 96), ss. 4(6), 87(6), 163(4)(b)

F11 Word inserted by Cable and Broadcasting Act 1984 (c. 46, SIF 96), s. 26(c) and repealed by Broadcasting Act 1990 (c. 42, SIF 96), ss. 163(4)(c), 203(3), Sch. 21 (with ss. 4(6), 87(6), Sch. 12 Pt. II para. 1)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 The text of ss. 16, 18(11), 51(7) and 52(6) is in the form in which it was originally enacted: it was not reproduced in Statutes in Force and does not reflect any amendments or repeals which may have been made prior to 1.2.1991.

Marginal Citations

M2 1981 c. 42.

M3 1968 c. 54.

M4 1975 c. 21.

52 Indecent photographs etc. of children.

(1) Any person who—

- (a) takes, or permits to be taken, any indecent photograph of a child (meaning, in this section a person under the age of 16);
- (b) distributes or shows such an indecent photograph;
- (c) has in his possession such an indecent photograph with a view to its being distributed or shown by himself or others: or

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- (d) publishes or causes to be published any advertisement likely to be understood as conveying that the advertiser distributes or shows such an indecent photograph, or intends to do so
shall be guilty of an offence under this section.
- (2) In proceedings under this section a person is to be taken as having been a child at any material time if it appears from the evidence as a whole that he was then under the age of 16.
- (3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable—
- (a) on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding 3 months or to a fine not exceeding the prescribed sum within the meaning of section 289B of the ^{M5}Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1975 (at the passing of this Act £1,000) or to both;
 - (b) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years or to a fine or to both.
- (4) For the purposes of this section, a person is to be regarded as distributing an indecent photograph if he parts with possession of it to, or exposes or offers it for acquisition by, another person.
- (5) Where a person is charged with an offence under subsection (1)(b) or (c) above, it shall be a defence for him to prove—
- (a) that he had a legitimate reason for distributing or showing the photograph or (as the case may be) having it in his possession; or
 - (b) that he had not himself seen the photograph and did not know, nor had any cause to suspect, it to be indecent.
- (6) In paragraph 2 of the Schedule to the ^{M6} Visiting Forces Act 1952 (offences against the person in the case of which a member of a visiting force is in certain circumstances not liable to be tried by a United Kingdom court) the word “ and” immediately preceding sub-paragraph (b)(iii) shall be omitted and after the said sub-paragraph (b)(iii) there shall be added—
- “(iv) section 52(1)(a) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.”
- (7) References in the ^{M7}Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1975 (except in sections 171 and 368 thereof) [^{F12}and in Part III of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 (children in need of compulsory measures of care)] to the offences mentioned in Schedule 1 to that Act shall include an offence under subsection (1)(a) above.
- (8) In this section—
- (a) references to an indecent photograph include an indecent film, a copy of an indecent photograph or film and an indecent photograph comprised in a film;
 - (b) a photograph (including one comprised in a film) shall, if it shows a child and is indecent, be treated for all purposes of this section as an indecent photograph of a child;
 - (c) references to a photograph include the negative as well as the positive version;
 - (d) “film” includes any form of video-recording.

Textual Amendments

F12 Words inserted by [Criminal Justice Act 1988 \(c. 33, SIF 39:2\)](#), [s. 170\(1\) Sch. 15 para. 89](#)

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Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C2** The text of ss. 16, 18(11), 51(7) and 52(6) is in the form in which it was originally enacted: it was not reproduced in Statutes in Force and does not reflect any amendments or repeals which may have been made prior to 1.2.1991.

Marginal Citations

- M5** 1975 c. 21.
M6 1952 c. 67.
M7 1975 c. 21.

[^{F13}52A Possession of indecent photographs of children.

- (1) It is an offence for a person to have any indecent photograph of a child (meaning in this section a person under the age of 16) in his possession.
- (2) Where a person is charged with an offence under subsection (1), it shall be a defence for him to prove—
 - (a) that he had a legitimate reason for having the photograph in his possession; or
 - (b) that he had not himself seen the photograph and did not know, nor had any cause to suspect, it to be indecent; or
 - (c) that the photograph was sent to him without any prior request made by him or on his behalf and that he did not keep it for an unreasonable time.
- (3) A person shall be liable on summary conviction of an offence under this section to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.
- (4) Subsections (2) and (8) of section 52 of this Act shall have effect for the purposes of this section as they have for the purposes of that section.]

Textual Amendments

- F13** S. 52A inserted by [Criminal Justice Act 1988 \(c. 33, SIF 39:1, 2\)](#) s. 161(1)(2)

53 Obstruction by pedestrians.

Any person who, being on foot in any public place—

- (a) obstructs, along with another or others, the lawful passage of any other person and fails to desist on being required to do so by a constable in uniform, or
- (b) wilfully obstructs the lawful passage of any other person

shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F14}level 2 on the standard scale].

Textual Amendments

- F14** Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\)](#), s. 289G

54 Playing instruments, singing, playing radios, etc.

- (1) Any person who—

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- (a) sounds or plays any musical instrument;
- (b) sings or performs; or
- (c) operates any radio or television receiver, record player, tape-recorder or other sound producing device

so as to give any other person reasonable cause for annoyance and fails to desist on being required to do so by a constable in uniform, shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding £50.

- (2) This section is without prejudice to any offence under section 62 of the ^{M8}Control of Pollution Act 1974 (operation of loudspeakers in streets).
- (3) Subsection (1) above shall not apply to the operation of a loudspeaker—
- (a) for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes, by a water authority in the exercise of any of its functions, or by a local authority within its area;
 - (b) for communicating with persons on a vessel for the purpose of directing the movement of that or any other vessel;
 - (c) if the loudspeaker forms part of a public telephone system;
 - (d) if the loudspeaker—
 - (i) is in or fixed to a vehicle, and
 - (ii) is operated solely for the entertainment of or for communicating with the driver or a passenger of the vehicle or, where the loudspeaker is or forms part of the horn or similar warning instrument of the vehicle, solely for giving warning to other traffic, and
 - (iii) is so operated as not to give reasonable cause for annoyance to persons in the vicinity;
 - (e) otherwise than on a [^{F15}road], by persons employed in connection with a transport undertaking used by the public in a case where the loudspeaker is operated solely for making announcements to passengers or prospective passengers or to other persons so employed;
 - (f) by a travelling showman on land which is being used for the purposes of a pleasure fair;
 - (g) in case of emergency.

In this subsection, “water authority” has the meaning assigned by section 3 of the ^{M9}Water (Scotland) Act 1980.

Textual Amendments

F15 Word substituted by [Roads \(Scotland\) Act 1984 \(c. 54, SIF 108\)](#), s. 156(1), [Sch. 9 para. 87\(4\)](#)

Marginal Citations

M8 1974 c. 40.

M9 1980 c. 45.

55 Touting.

- (1) Any person who—
- (a) in a public place—

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- (i) touts for the purpose of selling or advertising anything or otherwise obtaining custom so as to give any other person reasonable cause for annoyance; or
 - (ii) importunes any other person for that purpose so as to give that, or any other, person reasonable cause for annoyance; and
- (b) fails to desist when required to do so by a constable in uniform, shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F16}level 2 on the standard scale].

Textual Amendments

F16 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\)](#), **s. 289G**

56 Fires.

Any person who lays or lights a fire in a public place so as to endanger any other person or give him reasonable cause for alarm or annoyance or so as to endanger any property shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding [^{F17}level 3 on the standard scale].

Textual Amendments

F17 Words substituted by virtue of [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21, SIF 39:1\)](#), **s. 289G**

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