# West Belfast councillor urges calm amid rising anti-social behaviour at Roden Street footbridge



A local councillor in West Belfast has urged for calm following a series of “orchestrated” incidents of anti-social behaviour near the Roden Street footbridge, which spans the Westlink motorway. Over the weekend, police were called to respond to disturbances in this high-risk interface area.

Councillor Paul Doherty condemned those responsible for fuelling tensions, describing the behaviour as reckless and potentially tragic. Speaking to Belfast Live, he said: “This behaviour is not only reckless but could have tragic consequences. The throwing of objects and other forms of antisocial behaviour in such a high-risk area puts lives in danger — particularly those of children and young people involved.”

He appealed directly to parents and guardians in the area to have honest discussions with their children about the dangers associated with such conduct. “It’s not harmless. It could lead to serious injury, criminal charges, and long-term consequences for those involved. This needs to stop before someone is killed,” Cllr Doherty added.

The councillor also highlighted the efforts of local Neighbourhood Policing Teams and community workers who have been actively engaging with young people to address the issue on the ground. He called for political and community leaders to collaborate in efforts to de-escalate rising tensions in the area. This week, Cllr Doherty plans to meet with local residents, police, and statutory agencies to discuss ongoing support and preventative measures.

“Now is a time for leadership and for calm,” he said. “We all have a responsibility to protect our young people and to prevent a situation where someone could be seriously hurt or worse. The overwhelming majority of residents want to live in safe, peaceful communities — and we must ensure their voices are heard and respected.”

This latest incident follows earlier troubles in the same interface area, including an attack in early April where a 15-year-old girl was struck on the head with a brick. The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has issued an appeal to parents, urging them to know where their children are and to have open conversations about respecting others and abiding by the law.

A PSNI spokesperson said: “Neighbourhood Policing Teams in South and West Belfast have been responding to orchestrated interface based Antisocial Behaviour over the weekend in the vicinity of Roden Street footbridge. ASB beside the Westlink could have very serious consequences if a child were to be struck by a vehicle.”

The spokesperson further emphasised the potential legal repercussions for those involved in anti-social behaviour, including warnings, fines, and criminal charges, which could have lasting effects on education, employment prospects, and future opportunities.

By working together, police, community leaders, and residents hope to reduce violence and anti-social activity to make the local communities safer.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/Community/Community-Safety-and-Advice/Community-Safety/Reporting-Anti-Social-Behaviour> - Supports the claim about police and community response to antisocial behaviour, including the role of Neighbourhood Policing Teams and ways to report such incidents, reflecting the community safety measures around antisocial issues like those at Roden Street footbridge.
* <https://climatenorthernireland.org.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Segregation-and-the-Environment-Breaking-Down-Barriers.pdf> - Provides context on the Roden Street footbridge area, describing it as a high-risk interface area surrounded by a bleak, motor-dominated environment and highlighting concerns about antisocial behaviour in this segregated interface zone.
* <https://minutes.belfastcity.gov.uk/documents/s120706/Appendix%201%20-%20SCDP.pdf> - Details community diversionary programmes aimed at preventing antisocial behaviour, reflecting the local community and policing efforts to engage youths and reduce tensions, similar to the efforts referenced by Councillor Doherty.
* <https://www.streetcheck.co.uk/postcode/bt125dl> - Provides demographic information about the Roden Street area, noting a high level of social housing which can correlate with social challenges such as youth-related antisocial behaviour cited in the article.
* <https://forwardsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Environmental-Impact-Assessment-Response.pdf> - Discusses how isolation of walkways like the Roden Street footbridge may contribute to antisocial behaviour incidents, supporting the article’s implication about the physical environment influencing local tensions.