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Cockerel owner gets noise asbo

Press Association

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A chicken owner has been given an asbo after his cockerels kept neighbours awake by crowing 400 times an hour. Peter Stoodley, 64, has been ordered to evict 80 birds living at the back of his shop in Yeovil after the council received a "sustained period" of complaints about the noise.

The carpet salesman was ordered to pay £7,500 in fines and costs and given an antisocial behaviour order banning him from replacing the chickens with other livestock.

Stoodley, of Shepton Mallet, was summoned to South Somerset magistrates court for breaching a noise abatement order served by the district council. The court heard that residents in Wyndham Street next to the premises could no longer tolerate the screeching and smell.

The original order was brought after an independent environmental health officer measured 800 crowings between 5am and 7am during a test visit in August 2006.

Neighbours living near to Stoodley Carpets told officers the crowing started as early as 2.30am in summer and could be heard through closed windows. Stoodley did not attend the hearing and the application was granted in his absence.

A South Somerset district council spokesman said: "Mr Stoodley was prosecuted for breach of an abatement notice served under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 after a sustained period of numerous complaints were received and after the nuisance was witnessed by an external environmental health officer."

Stoodley said: "It's absolute rubbish in my eyes - they should have better things to do with taxpayers' money than trying to get rid of a few chickens."

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