

Responding to anti-social behaviour

As a social landlord we strive to provide an environment in which people are happy to live. We are committed to combating anti-social behaviour (ASB), working with residents and agencies to resolve problems. ASB and neighbour nuisance ranges from annoyances like barking dogs or loud music to more serious issues such as harassment and violence.

You can report an incident of anti-social behaviour over the telephone or by clicking [here](#).

The Government's **Respect** agenda aims to ensure that local agencies tackle unacceptable behaviour and its causes to improve quality of life for residents. It is important to our tenants that we respond to reports of anti-social behaviour effectively. We are serious about our responsibilities and have signed up to the Respect Standard for Housing Management. We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods and will take prompt action when necessary.

In our work to tackle anti-social behaviour, we have formed partnerships with a number of agencies, including Devon & Cornwall Constabulary and Cornwall Council Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

Wherever possible we find ways to resolve problems rather than evict tenants. Eviction is very much a last resort.

Examples of action we take to resolve cases of anti-social behaviour are to feature on an occasional basis in our published newsletter, which is circulated to the homes of all of our tenants.

Anti-social behaviour causes real misery for people who simply wish to get on with their day to day lives. This should not be tolerated and we aim to assist affected residents in the resolution of such issues.

What is anti-social behaviour?

- the conduct is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person and directly or indirectly relates to or affects our housing management functions

or

- it consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation owned or managed by us for an unlawful purpose.

We will also treat behaviour as anti-social if it comes under the definition of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which is:

acting in a manner which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons who are not of the same household.

Examples of anti-social behaviour include:

- harassment (including racial harassment and homophobic behaviour also known as hate crimes)
- intimidation, verbal abuse, violence or threats of violence
- assault
- unruly behaviour, public disturbance, missile throwing and damage by groups or individuals
- vandalism, rubbish, graffiti, fly tipping, fly posting, abandoned vehicles, arson and other criminal damage or environmental crime
- excessive noise such as loud amplified music, DIY, barking dogs
- drug and/or alcohol abuse

What can be done to try and resolve the issue of anti-social behaviour that is affecting you:

- try and resolve the problem by contacting the individual with whom you have the issue
- if speaking to the person causing the problem does not work, note down details of what the problem is, when it occurs and how long it lasts an incident record form, available from our offices, will help you do this
- consider taking part in mediation with the other party. Your Neighbourhood Officer will be able to refer you to a mediation service, who will use trained mediators to negotiate an agreed settlement with all parties involved in the dispute
- contact your local authority, who have a responsibility to investigate complaints of statutory noise nuisance such as amplified music, DIY and barking dogs. If the noise is proved to be unreasonable, they can take action as set out in a number of acts. More information can be obtained from logging onto www.noiseconcern.org/are_you_considerate.asp

What we will do:

- contact you to make an initial assessment of your reports within our published timescales
- take steps to minimise any immediate threat to your safety or the safety of your household in consultation with other agencies such as the Police, Social Services.
- treat all complaints you make in confidence and not take action that will reveal your identity to others without first getting your permission. If you wish to

remain anonymous we will discuss how this may affect the action we can take.

- ask you what action you would like us to take
- ask for you to make a record of incidents that occur an incident record form, available from your local housing office, will help you do this
- keep you informed of progress and confirm in writing when the case is closed

Following the initial assessment of the case we could also:

- offer support and advice to those experiencing problems with anti-social behaviour.
- check whether there have been any similar incidents involving the parties concerned
- talk (with your permission only) to those parties found to be causing reported incidents and talk to others who live near you, to see if they have experienced similar problems
- discuss the options for action, taking into consideration the nature of reported incident/s, the amount of evidence available and whether those responsible are our residents

Where action is to go ahead this may include the following:

- *issuing a written warning and/or caution*
- *asking all parties concerned to attend a mediation session*
- *asking for the support from other multi-agency parties such as the police, environmental health, local anti-social behaviour officers etc*
- *seeking advice about any changes to homes that may alleviate the problem*

Where the problem is serious or persistent we will consider:

- *taking legal action, which could include: asking the court to demote an assured tenancy to an assured shorthold tenancy; seeking injunctions*
- *offering support and advice to any complainants, victims or witnesses attending court*
- *supporting other agencies, such as the police, in any civil or criminal action they wish to take.*

More information



[Countering Anti-Social Behaviour Policy](#)



[Guide to completing ASB Diary Form](#)



[ASB Incident Diary Form](#)