

London Borough of Haringey & Homes for Haringey

Summary of Policy & Procedures on Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

Haringey Council, Homes for Haringey and its partners are committed to dealing effectively with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)



Homes for Haringey

working together



Haringey Council

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1. Introduction

The Council and its agent for the management of its housing stock, Homes for Haringey, is committed to creating an environment where anti-social behaviour and hate crime is not tolerated, to allow Council tenants and other residents to live free from violence, disturbance and nuisance.

Homes for Haringey will investigate ASB issues which relate to the properties they manage. They will refer more serious cases of anti-Social Behaviour to the Council's dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour Team (ASBAT) for investigation.

Central to the approach taken by the Council and its partners are the principles of prevention, building on existing work, supporting victims and prosecuting persistent offenders. Achieving all these principles will be part of the challenge. We aim to strike a balance between enforcement and prevention, ensuring that the rights of all those involved are considered when making any decisions. Resources for preventative work have been harder to access since the economic downturn and its impact on public finances. It is important for public services to have an honest dialogue with residents about what can be achieved and who is best placed to effect desired changes. A partnership approach is essential.

2. Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The Crime and Disorder Act defines ASB in terms of its impact or likely impact on victims, as well as the actions of the perpetrator. Specifically where a person is found to have,

'acted in an anti-social manner, that is to say, in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household.'

This definition is appropriate when considering an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO), but Council Officers and partner agencies, such as the Police and Registered Social Landlords, need to deal with a wider spectrum of ASB, including activities that call for different legal remedies and informal solutions (see pages 16-20 of full document). The ASBAT and Homes for Haringey have adopted Haringey's Community Safety Partnership definition. Like the one in the Crime and Disorder Act, the impact on victims is crucial:

"Anti-Social Behaviour covers the range of behaviours from low-level nuisance to serious harassment, which can damage the quality of life and interfere with the ability of people to use and enjoy their home or community."

How each case is handled will vary on the specific circumstances of the victim and the perpetrator. We have, therefore, adopted a broad definition.

It is recognised that the terms "hate crime" and "harassment" also have a wide definition and incorporate many types of behaviour, including incidents where, race, religion or belief, transgender identity, disability or sexual orientation are a factor. The priority for the ASBAT, Homes for Haringey and partners in Haringey is to tackle ASB in its wider definition effectively.

3. What action will Homes for Haringey/ASBAT take?

Homes for Haringey and/or the ASBAT will respond to reports of anti-social behaviour swiftly and efficiently. The action we take will depend on the seriousness of the complaint. The complainant will be informed of any action taken by Homes for Haringey or the ASBAT team. Where appropriate, Homes for

Haringey or the ASBAT team will use the range of legal and other remedies available to abate anti-social behaviour.

The action that we will take will depend on the types of issues that are reported, the powers we have to address those issues and the type of action that is appropriate. Advice and assistance will be given about what we can do to support you and help you resolve your issues.

Where you report acts of actual or threatened violence we will:

- Contact you to assess your case within 1 day
- Offer you an interview to discuss your case within 1 further day
- Interview the perpetrator within 3 days
- Complete a review of the case within 25 days.

Where you report behaviour that prevents you from the peaceful and quiet enjoyment of your home or your community or is a breach of tenancy/lease conditions we will:

- Contact you to assess your case within 1 day
- Offer you an interview to discuss your case within 5 further days
- Explain to you the action we will take within a further 5 and within a following 7 days, interview the alleged perpetrator.
- Complete a review of the case within 36 days.

ASB officers will exercise judgement as to what enforcement action (if any) is required. On receipt of an allegation of ASB the ASBAT will make inquiries and investigations and discuss the results with the legal officers where appropriate (in ASBAT or LBH) before deciding what action to take.

For nuisance cases where no corroborative evidence can be ascertained (i.e. one-on-one complaints), Homes for Haringey may refer you and the alleged perpetrator to independent Mediation.

Where you report behaviour that is not considered as a breach of the tenancy agreement/lease and for which Homes for Haringey has no further legal powers upon which to act or does not consider legal action appropriate, we may recommend that you make use of the Mediation Service to assist you to resolve the issue. We ask complainants to discuss this option with us.

4. Support for Complainants and Witnesses

We will deal with the matter promptly and keep you informed as your case progresses, either in writing, by telephone or by meeting with you.

Where our investigations warrant it, Homes for Haringey or ASBAT will take action against those whose behaviour causes nuisance or annoyance to others. Where you act as a witness in any legal matters we will endeavour to support you through that process.

The following are examples of the ways we may support complainants and witnesses:-

- Extra security measures including installing additional locks, spy holes and panic alarms may be considered and discussed with you.

- Officers may provide support directly to you particularly if you are assisting Homes for Haringey or the Council with legal action or referrals may be made to other agencies and service departments with your consent (e.g. Victim Support, Social Services).
- Referrals may be made to the Council's Housing Advice Team for additional support to private sector tenants who are experiencing harassment and may also be vulnerable on grounds of age or mental illness.
- We may provide practical support during Court cases in providing transport to and from Court and further legal protection following Court cases to protect you from any reprisals.
- The use of hearsay evidence containing anonymous witness statements will be considered in appropriate cases.

The following principles underpin the design and delivery of all strategies and initiatives to deal with anti-social behaviour. Homes for Haringey will work with relevant partner agencies where appropriate to achieve the following:-

- Responses will take into account the needs and concerns of the Victim
- Responses will be prompt and appropriate
- Services will be accessible and inclusive
- Services will promote and enhance communities

5. Who we can take action against

Tenants, leaseholders, owner-occupiers and any individual causing distress and/or disturbance to tenants and leaseholders of the Council and other Haringey residents. If you are a housing association tenant you ought to contact your landlord in the first instance. Their contact details will be on your tenancy contract or in the welcome pack you received when you first moved in. Please note, in an emergency call 999.

6. Prevention of Anti-Social Behaviour

We are committed to deterring anti-social behaviour, using a range of methods. Haringey recognises that one of the most effective ways of tackling ASB is to prevent it from taking place in the first place. While additional resources for prevention may be hard to come by, a great deal of disorder prevention takes place every day through the core work of many partners.

Examples include:

- Ward based, Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams swiftly attend to local priorities that have been identified with residents. ASB is frequently highlighted as a local priority and feedback on progress will be given every month to each of the Borough's Ward Panels. The priorities for each ward will also be set every three months.
- Anti-Social Behaviour practitioners in Haringey will always look to identify those at risk of committing ASB, identify cases where access to support services might be needed and make referrals promptly. Examples may include Social Services, Mental Health and substance misuse support services. Multi-agency case panels exist to consider individuals engaged in more serious activity such as gang-related or extremist activity.
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) are an important preventative tool in Haringey and are used as an early intervention measure to good effect. They help to monitor standards ensuring that individuals understand the impact of their behaviour on the community while offering the necessary support for them to stop. ABCs can help achieve long-term change and prevent further escalation of ASB.

- Haringey will continue to develop activities and initiatives which will encourage residents, their children and other people in the community to raise their aspirations and take an active role in their community.
- Haringey Council and its partners has established a new Youth, Community and Participation Service which will agree on a Prevention Strategy that targets effort on those most in need.
- The new Neighbourhood Action Teams (NATs) in the Single Frontline service of the Council and their contracted staff will be directed towards area-based improvements in conjunction with residents' views.
- New Homes for Haringey tenants will be visited by their Tenancy Management Officer (TMO) shortly after moving into their new home. An explanation of the key areas of the tenancy agreement will be given with particular attention to the tenant's obligation to behave in an acceptable manner.

7. Support for perpetrators

Homes for Haringey and the Council will balance the need to take action with the aim to support and rehabilitate perpetrators.

This is particularly relevant when considering issues of anti-social behaviour that are the direct or indirect consequence of:-

- Drug abuse
- Alcohol abuse
- Mental Health problems
- Disability

Where perpetrators may be vulnerable on one or more of the above grounds, referrals may be made to relevant support agencies. These may include, but are not limited to, the local community health team, drug action teams and community-based organisations.

The ASBAT may convene a multi- agency meeting as required to consider the perpetrator's needs and agree an action plan that may support and assist in their rehabilitation. Multi-agency partnerships may include, but are not limited to, working with residents and local agencies such as the police, youth offending teams, schools, social services, drug action teams and probation services.

Legal action may be taken against a perpetrator of anti-social behaviour who does not engage with support agencies, or where their behaviour continues to affect the community even if they are engaging.

Juvenile perpetrators often experience problems with their family and school due to their behaviour. We will attempt to ascertain the causes of the juvenile's anti-social behaviour and involve their parents/guardian. If appropriate, schools are also contacted to obtain information, as are other agencies (e.g. Children's Services).

Homes for Haringey promotes and openly advocates the use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) to moderate juvenile behaviour and operate an effective monitoring system for any breaches.

8. Cross-Tenure

Anti-social behaviour reported from residents residing on cross tenure estates will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

The Council is committed to ensuring that all residents in the borough are able to live free from intimidation. To this end, the Council has produced information containing:-

- A victim support pack
- A resident's guide to dealing with anti-social behaviour

This information will assist residents in identifying cases of anti-social behaviour and harassment, to guide them through the processes involved in helping us to respond adequately and promptly to a case. The toolkit contains details of remedies that the Council can take and details of referral agencies that are able to support and assist complainants.

If you are a Homes for Haringey tenant or live in the private rented sector or are an owner-occupier, you can report incidents by contacting the **Anti-Social Behaviour Line on 020 8489 1000**. Operators will take details of your report and pass this over to the ASBAT for further assessment.

Alternatively you can also report incidents to the **Housing Advice Team on 020 8489 4309**. In cases involving registered social landlords/private landlords the Council will attempt to refer complainants back to their relevant landlord for the appropriate action to be taken.

9. Data Protection and Information Exchange

The Council & Homes for Haringey are signatories to the Information Sharing Protocol within the Community Safety Partnership, this includes:-

- Guidance on the data protection implications of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Briefing on the Human Rights Act 1998
- A guide to test the balance of public interest against the test of fairness to disclose information.

10. Confidentiality

Information provided by victims will be treated as confidential information. Haringey Council accept this duty of confidentiality and will not disclose such information without the consent of the person concerned save as provided and allowed within the context of the legal framework relating to information sharing. Any provision for information sharing under an established legal framework will adhere to the confidentiality statement in the Haringey ASB Information Sharing Protocol that all partners will have to sign up to in advance.

11. Publicity

Publicity in Haringey will use many different vehicles and some key ones will include the use of local media coverage or targeted leafleting and poster campaigns. We will use publicity to assist us and our partners in reassuring tenants and the wider community that effective action is being taken to tackle ASB in Haringey.

Whenever possible we will publicise the successful resolution of cases. Where this involves the identification of those subject to injunctive measures (where the court has not imposed reporting restrictions) we will make decisions on a case by case basis and all risks will be considered.

Publicity will be used to:

- Increase public confidence in public services
- Increase public reassurance in safety and help tackle the fear of crime
- Enforce any injunctive measures
- Act as a deterrent to others whose nuisance behaviour impinges on the quality of life of others
- Seek the engagement of the community and encourage them to take action
- Provide tenants with the information they require to enable them to report an incident of ASB

12. Equalities Policy and Objectives¹

Haringey Council is committed to reflecting the diversity of the community it serves and promoting equality of opportunity for everyone. We aim to ensure equal access to our services by all citizens on the basis of need and to provide services in a manner which is sensitive to the individual, whatever their background. We will represent the needs of our diverse communities to other agencies and make equal opportunities a key guiding principle in all of our work with our partners. We will work to ensure that our workforce reflects the community it serves. It is the responsibility of every employee of the council to uphold and implement this policy and the responsibility of each individual manager at all levels to plan and provide their services to realise this policy.

13. Useful Contacts (*NB: See ASB Policy Statement document for full list*)

Customer Contact/Service Centre – Tel: 0208 489 1000 (Monday to Friday, 9-5pm)

Re the following: Abandoned vehicles, Graffiti, Fly-posting, Noise, Hate Crime & Harassment; and any other ASB

Please Note (Re Noise): Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9am - 5pm). Outside office hours: Weekdays, Monday – Friday (5pm - 9am). Tel 020 8348 3148 - Weekends, Friday 5pm to Monday 9am - Tel: 020 8348 3148. We no longer offer a 24 hour response service. If there is an officer on duty then we undertake to call you back within 30 minutes. During exceptionally busy times the response can be delayed. You will be advised when you call if there isn't an officer on duty to respond immediately to your call, but all calls will be logged.

Homes for Haringey:

Homes for Haringey tenants can contact their Tenancy Management Officer or call Homes for Haringey on, Tel: 0800 195 3404 or 020 8489 5611 (9am - 5pm Monday to Friday)

Broadwater Farm Office

108c Gloucester Road
Tottenham
London N17 6GZ

¹ The full document is available at, http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/council/how_the_council_works/equalities/equaloppspolicy.htm

Tel: **020 8489 8650**

South Tottenham Area Office

Apex House,
820 Seven Sisters Road
Tottenham
London N15 5PQ
Tel: 020 8489 0000
Minicom: **020 8489 4309**

Wood Green Area Office

48 Station Road
Wood Green
London N22 7TY
Tel: 020 8489 3464

Customer Service Centres:

Main Council Switchboard **020 8489 0000**
(Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm)

Customer services centres provide frontline services, including housing management, Housing Benefits, Council Tax, homelessness and general housing advice, abandoned vehicles, reporting anti social behaviour and reporting graffiti and fly-posting.

South Tottenham Customer Service Centre

Apex House
820 Seven Sisters Road
London N15 5PQ (Monday to Friday – 9am-5pm)

Wood Green Customer Services Centre

48 Station Road
Wood Green
London N22 7TY (Monday to Friday – 9am-5pm)

Complaints: If you are unhappy with the service, you have the right to complain. Most complaints are dealt with under the corporate complaints procedure. See the link below.

http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/contact/complaints/how_we_deal_with_a_complaint.htm

Housing Service Complaints Team

Alexandra House
10 Station Road
Wood Green
London N22 7TR
Email: housing.complaints@haringey.gov.uk
Tel: **020 8489 0000**

Alternatively you can contact Local Councillors:

You can write to the:

Members Room
River Park House
225 High Road
Wood Green
London N22 8HQ

(Or ask about surgeries at your local office)

MPs

You can contact your local MPs at the Houses of Parliament, London SW1 or ask about surgeries at your local office.

Local Government Ombudsman

Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP
Tel: **020 7217 4620**
Email: enquiries.london@lgo.org.uk

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House
Water House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Tel: **01625 545 745**
Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Police

All Police Stations in Haringey can be contacted on **020 8808 1212**
If required urgently or in an emergency call **999**

Tottenham Police Station

398 High Road
Tottenham
London N17 9JA

Hornsey Police Station

98 Tottenham Lane
Hornsey
London N8 7EJ

Haringey Police Safer Neighbourhoods Teams

http://content.met.police.uk/Page/TeamFinder?scope_id=1257246763951

Metropolitan Police Service
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender issues
Graham Alldus PC 237YR
Liaison Officer
Hornsey Police Station
98 Tottenham Lane
London N8 7EJ
Tel: **020 8345 1939**

Haringey Police Community Safety Unit
The unit is responsible for the investigation of hate crimes within the Borough of Haringey. Tel: **020 8345 0965** or **020 8345 1944**

Crime Prevention Officers and Crime Prevention Design
Advisors can be contacted on:
Tel: **020 8345 2164**

Council Community Safety Team
2nd Floor North
River Park House
225 High Road
Wood Green
London
N22 8HQ
Tel: 020 8489 1000
Email: saferrcommunities@haringey.gov.uk

Victim Support
Octavia House
50 Banner Street
London
EC1Y 8ST
Tel: 020 7336 1777: Victim Support have Witness Service staff at Enfield Magistrates Court - Lordship Lane (Tel: **020 8493 8947**)

Haringey Youth Offending Service
247 High Road
Wood Green
London N22 8HF
Tel: **020 8489 1508**

The Enforcement Response Service
Regulatory Services
Place and Sustainability Directorate
Units 271-272, Lee Valley Technopark, Ashley Road
Tottenham, London, N17 9LN
Email enforcement.response@haringey.gov.uk

