

# TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR






Council Housing is committed to taking positive action to deal with all forms of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and breaches of the Lancaster City Council Tenancy Agreement.



# DEFINING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

## Anti-Social Behaviour can be defined as:

-  Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person.
-  Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation or residential premises.
-  Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Lancaster City Council acknowledges that ASB comes in lots of forms and can range from everyday incidents, such as noise nuisance, to criminal acts. The types of behaviour we consider anti-social include, but are not limited to:

- Intimidation and harassment
- Violence or threats of violence
- Dumping rubbish (fly tipping)
- Noise nuisance e.g. loud music
- Disorderly behaviour and drunkenness
- Pet nuisance i.e. uncontrolled animals and dog fouling
- Intimidation on the grounds of religious belief, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender or other bias
- Domestic abuse
- Drug/substance misuse/dealing
- Damage to property
- Graffiti

Where ASB involves criminal activity, we will expect victims to report criminal behaviour to the police and we will expect the police and other statutory agencies to take action where they have sufficient evidence to do so.

## What is not considered ASB:

Many neighbours will naturally have different values or opinions which can sometimes cause problems. It is important to show consideration and tolerance to your neighbours, and be respectful of differing lifestyles and circumstances.

The list below provides some of the examples that we do not class as anti-social behaviour and will therefore not investigate:

- Babies crying
- Cooking odours
- Parking disputes
- Clashes of lifestyle
- Noise transference due to poor sound insulation
- One off parties/ BBQ where there's no evidence problems will persist
- Sounds of normal day to day living such as opening doors & using the stairs
- Family disputes
- Children playing
- DIY during reasonable hours
- Boundary issues or disputes
- Minor personal differences such as dirty looks or fall outs between children

Where ASB is committed by private residents, Council Housing is unable to undertake enforcement action and this should be reported directly to Lancaster City Council on T: 01524 582000 or via the Lancaster City Council website: [www.lancaster.gov.uk](http://www.lancaster.gov.uk)

# REPORTING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Council Housing recognises the detrimental effect that ASB can have on the lives of our residents and communities. However, it is important that complainants and victims of ASB understand in which circumstances we can intervene, and the tools and powers available to us. We will not raise expectations that we can take action when we are unable to do so, or where responsibility and powers lie elsewhere.

We recognise and accept our role to tackle and prevent ASB, but we also recognise that residents and other agencies share this responsibility.

We reserve the right not to pursue a report where we have evidence that the complainant is being unreasonable, vindictive or vexatious (intending to annoy/distress). In such instances, we will inform the complainant that we will not be taking further action in relation to that specific complaint and why.

Anti-Social Behaviour can be reported to us in the following ways:



**Talk to us in person or write to us:**

**F.A.O. Council Housing, Customer Service Desk, Lancaster Town Hall, Dalton Square, Lancaster, LA1 1PJ**



**Or alternatively at:**

**F.A.O. Council Housing, Customer Service Desk, Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road East, Morecambe, LA4 5AF**



**01524  
582929**



**chasb@lancaster.gov.uk**



**www.lancaster.gov.uk**

# CASE MANAGEMENT

Council Housing treats all reported incidents of violence, or threats of violence, hate crime and domestic abuse seriously and will take immediate and appropriate action whenever incidents are reported or identified.

A victim-centred approach will be followed, ensuring that residents have access to appropriate support services and feel able to work with Council Housing staff in the investigation of the incident when we assess the risk of harm to victims, and potential vulnerabilities. When we receive a complaint about ASB. We will also agree an action plan with complainants.

When a complaint of ASB is made, we will record and categorise this and we will acknowledge your complaint according to the following timescales:

Category	Examples	Timescale*
High	Domestic Abuse, Violence, Hate Crimes ,Criminal Activity	1 working day
Medium/ Low	Verbal Abuse, Criminal damage, Ongoing noise nuisance, Intimidating/ Abusive Behaviour, Noise, Animal nuisance, Nuisance from vehicles	3-5 working days

*\*Please note: the timescale provided relates to acknowledging your ASB complaint, not its resolution, which will be discussed with you individually.*

# INTERVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT

We will consider all the options available when investigating and taking action in a case of ASB, and will use the legislative framework to ensure the protection of victims and to prevent incidents reoccurring. There are a range of tools and powers available, some of which are delivered in partnership with other agencies. These include:

- **Written & Verbal Warnings**
- **Extension of Introductory Tenancies**
- **Injunctions**
- **Demotion Orders**
- **Notice of Seeking Possession**
- **Parenting Agreements**
- **Community Protection Notices**
- **Dear Neighbour Cards**
- **Mediation**
- **Acceptable Behaviour Agreements**
- **Criminal Behaviour Orders**
- **Closure Powers**
- **Notice of Pending Possession**
- **Tenancy Warnings**
- **Absolute Grounds for Possession**

Council Housing recognises that eviction is a useful tool to tackle ASB, and will use the discretionary and absolute grounds for possession when appropriate.

However, in order to promote social inclusion and prevent homelessness, eviction to resolve ASB will only be used when other actions have not been or will not be successful.

We will not move complainants, or alleged perpetrators as a means to resolve ASB or deal with a situation (other than in exceptional circumstances).

# NOISE NUISANCE

When experiencing noise nuisance from a neighbour, we recommend initially speaking directly with them, as this often resolves the issue swiftly and effectively. Approach the conversation calmly and fairly, explaining how the noise impacts you and seeking their cooperation. If this does not resolve the problem or if you are uncomfortable approaching them, you can contact us for further investigation.

To assist us in handling your case, please download The Noise App 2.0 from your app store and submit noise reports through it. The app, available on Apple and Google Play, allows you to record and submit evidence of noise nuisances directly to your case officer. You can also use the app to maintain a noise diary and communicate with the officer.

The app supports additional evidence submission, such as photographs and videos, to bolster your report. Should legal action become necessary, your identity might be disclosed, and you may need to provide testimony if the case goes to court.

## WHAT WE WILL NEED FROM YOU

To effectively report incidents of antisocial behaviour, please provide us with concise and chronological details. For noise-related issues, download and use The Noise App 2.0.

Additionally, log relevant incidents with the police via 999/101 or Crimestoppers, especially for suspected drug dealing, property damage, violence, serious offenses, immediate danger, or potential serious public disruptions. This helps us coordinate with law enforcement.

Attend any appointments we schedule with you, or inform us if you cannot. Understand the actions we can and cannot take against the person causing the issues, and recognize that case resolution may take time.

Be specific in your reports, using a Nuisance Log to support future enforcement. Include details about who was involved, the nature of the antisocial behaviour, the time and date, the location, and how the incident caused you alarm, distress, or harassment. Our officers work on evidence and without concise reports we cannot progress and resolve issues effectively.

# ZERO TOLERANCE

Council Housing does not condone ASB committed towards its employees, or those working on its behalf under any circumstances. We operate a Zero Tolerance approach of abuse, aggression or violence against employees or contractors including, but not limited to:

- Shouting and swearing
- Offensive or abusive behaviour due to race, religion, sexuality, disability or gender.
- Offensive comments/ gestures including those of a sexual nature
- Verbal/written threats
- Comments that cause emotional harm or distress. Including posts of Social Media
- Excessive contact

Appropriate action will be taken where such incidents occur, and may result in additional risk controls being put in place to manage tenancies.

# CASE CLOSURE

We will close cases where any of the following applies:

- The case has been resolved
- There is insufficient evidence for action to be taken
- There is a lack of response or engagement from victims
- Where it is established that the report of ASB is vexatious or unreasonable

When cases are closed, Council Housing will inform victims and complainants. If a case is closed and victims or complainants do not agree with this, they are entitled to request that the case is reviewed by the Community Safety Manager.