



# Lancaster City Council

## Housing and Property: Council Housing

### Summary of policy and procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour

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## About this Document

This leaflet explains how Lancaster City Council – Council Housing deals with anti-social behaviour (ASB), what you can expect from us, and how to report concerns.

We are committed to creating safe, welcoming neighbourhoods and to tackling anti-social behaviour fairly, proportionately and with a focus on preventing harm

## Our Approach to Anti-Social Behaviour

We take anti-social behaviour seriously and aim to deal with it as early as possible.

Our approach is:

- Victim-centred – we focus on the harm being caused and the impact on those affected
- Risk-based – we assess risk and vulnerability from the start and throughout the case
- Proportionate – we will only take action that is reasonable and lawful
- Supportive – we consider support needs for victims, witnesses and perpetrators
- Preventative where possible, but firm enforcement will be used when required

We work closely with partner agencies including the Police, Environmental Protection, Fire and Rescue, Health, Social Care and specialist support services.

## What is Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour is defined by law as behaviour that:

- causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to others; or
- causes nuisance or annoyance in relation to someone's home; or
- causes housing-related nuisance or annoyance.

Examples of ASB include (this list is not exhaustive):

- harassment, intimidation or threatening behaviour
- hate-related behaviour or hate crime
- domestic abuse
- violence or threats of violence
- persistent excessive noise
- serious vandalism or damage to property
- drug- or alcohol-related nuisance
- unacceptable behaviour by visitors or household members

Some issues may feel upsetting but may not meet the legal threshold for ASB (for example one-off incidents or everyday household noise). Each report is assessed on its individual circumstances, including frequency, intent, vulnerability and harm caused.

## Hate Behaviour and Domestic Abuse

Some behaviours are treated as high-risk from the point of report.

### Hate behaviour

Hate behaviour is any incident perceived to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone because of who they are, for example their:

- race or ethnicity
- religion or belief
- disability
- sexual orientation
- gender identity
- age

Hate behaviour is always treated as high priority. Where a criminal offence may have occurred, the Police are the lead agency.

### Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse includes controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between partners or family members.

Domestic abuse is both:

- a serious safeguarding issue, and
- a breach of tenancy.

Reports of domestic abuse are handled sensitively, confidentially and with a strong focus on safety. We work closely with specialist agencies and safeguarding partners to support victims.

## How to Report Anti-Social Behaviour

If someone is in immediate danger, always call 999.

You can report ASB in the following ways:

- Email: [councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk)
- Telephone (office hours): 01524 582929
- Out-of-hours emergencies: 01524 67099
- In person at Lancaster or Morecambe Town Hall
- In writing to:

Council Housing, PO Box 4, Lancaster, LA1 1PJ

You can report anonymously, but this may limit the action we are able to take.

## What happens after you report ASB?

When we receive a report, we will:

- assess risk, vulnerability and urgency
- allocate a named officer
- contact you:
  - same day or within 24 hours for high-risk cases (e.g. hate behaviour, domestic abuse, threats of violence)
  - within 5 working days for other ASB reports
- agree next steps and an action plan with you
- keep in regular contact and provide updates
- explain what evidence may be needed (for example incident diaries)

We will only close a case once reasonable and proportionate steps have been taken and will explain the reasons for closure.

## How we deal with anti-social behaviour

We use a Prevention, Intervention and Enforcement (PIE) approach.

This may include:

- early intervention and advice
- mediation or restorative approaches
- support referrals for those involved (with consent)
- warning letters or agreements
- legal action where necessary (including injunctions or tenancy enforcement)

Enforcement is always based on evidence, risk and proportionality.

## Support for victims and witnesses

We recognise the impact ASB can have on people's wellbeing.

We will:

- treat people with dignity and respect
- identify vulnerabilities and safeguarding concerns
- make referrals to specialist support agencies where appropriate
- make reasonable adjustments so people can access our service safely

Safeguarding concerns may require information to be shared without consent where someone is at risk.

## Data protection and confidentiality

We treat information sensitively and in line with data protection law.

Information will not be shared without consent unless:

- there is a legal requirement, or
- there is an overriding safeguarding concern.

## If you are unhappy with our service

If you are unhappy with how we have handled your ASB report, you can make a complaint:

- Online: [www.lancaster.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/complaints)
- Email: [housingcomplaints@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:housingcomplaints@lancaster.gov.uk)
- Telephone: 01524 582929
- In person at a council office
- In writing to:

Lancaster City Council, PO Box 4, Lancaster, LA1 1PJ

You also have the legal right to request an ASB Case Review (Community Trigger) if certain thresholds are met. Our staff can explain how this works.

## Our commitment

We are committed to:

- fair, respectful and transparent services
- tackling ASB using all appropriate tools
- protecting victims and communities
- working in partnership to improve neighbourhood safety