

ForHousing 

Anti-social behaviour handbook

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Introduction

Everyone should be able to feel safe and secure in and outside of their home. There are some differences between what is considered as anti-social behaviour, and what isn't. This handbook gives you more information about what we mean by anti-social behaviour. We've pulled together a list of behaviours so you have all the information you need to handle an uncomfortable situation. We are here to help so please contact us if you feel unsafe in your community.

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**ALWAYS CALL 999
IN AN EMERGENCY**



What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that causes harm to an individual, to their community or to their environment. Here are some examples:

Noise

- Excessive shouting and banging
- Loud music, especially in the evening or at night

Threatening behaviour

- Rowdy, aggressive or threatening behaviour or language
- Intimidation, harassment or threats or acts of violence towards others. This includes cyber bullying on social media and mobile phones

Illegal activities

- Criminal activity which affects the community such as drug dealing
- Using a ForHousing home for illegal purposes such as handling stolen goods

Domestic abuse

This can affect everyone regardless of gender or sexuality. It takes many forms and can be:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Examples include:

- Problems with a partner you live with, or with one or more members of your family
- Threats or actual violence such as forced marriage or honour based violence

See page 22 for advice on domestic abuse,

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Resolving problems

We will always do our best to resolve any problems. But there are some things that we may be unable to help with. This includes:

- Personal disagreements between family members or friends or neighbours – unless there is a fear of harm
- Isolated or one-off incidents such as disturbances caused by DIY or a party
- Everyday living noise such as babies crying, children playing or people moving about inside their property
- Parking disputes

Of course, if the nuisance is persistent or is happening at an unreasonable time then please report it to us.



Racial harassment and hate behaviour

If you suffer harassment or hate behaviour because of your racial background, age, religion, sexuality, disability, gender or for belonging to an alternative or subculture for example, emo, goth or punk you can report this to the police or directly to us.

We will look at ways of supporting you if you report this to us.

See page 24 for more info.

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Your obligation

We aim to be the best landlord we can be. In return, we expect you to abide by the terms of your tenancy agreement. That means you are responsible for making sure anyone living in or visiting your home does not annoy or disturb other people. This includes inside your home, in communal areas and within the local neighbourhood.

How to be a good neighbour

We want you to enjoy living in your home. We are all different and lead different lifestyles; for example, some people work shifts so may be asleep during the day and carry out daily activities at different times to yours. A little tolerance and consideration can go a long way. Here are some tips for being a good neighbour:

- Respect your environment by keeping the neighbourhood clean, tidy and free from anti-social behaviour
- Recognise that good community spirit benefits us all offering mutual support in dealing with local problems
- Respect your neighbours and their homes, irrespective of religion, race, ability, culture or beliefs
- Look out for older, vulnerable and less fortunate members of your community
- Be responsible for the behaviour of your children and anyone visiting your home
- Respect the rights of children and young people to play and meet in a safe environment

We have a friendly and dedicated team passionate about listening to you to make a difference. Everyone has the right to contact us or any other relevant group to help resolve a problem in a peaceful and amicable way.

Damage to property

Quality homes matter. We respect the importance of your home and know you do too. If anyone deliberately damages a home we'll take action and if necessary, start legal proceedings. This could include a 'without notice' injunction or possession proceedings.

We care about spending money wisely and in ways that benefit communities the most.

That means we'll recover the cost of any repairs from those responsible in line with our policy. Contact us if you are concerned about anyone deliberately causing damage.

Protecting colleagues

We expect colleagues, contractors and partner organisation to treat you fairly and expect the same in return. No-one should be subject to threats, intimidation or abuse. We'll take action against anyone who behaves unacceptably towards colleagues or anyone working on our behalf.

What if those committing anti-social behaviour are not ForHousing tenants?

Each day we focus on improving community wellbeing and have the powers and responsibility to protect your quality of life. Where necessary, we will work with the police, the local authority and other housing providers to take action against anyone committing anti-social behaviour. We also have powers to protect non-ForHousing tenants from unacceptable behaviour that may occur in the local community.

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How to report anti-social behaviour

Anyone affected can report anti-social behaviour – you don't have to be a ForHousing tenant. You can do this in several ways:

- Website: <https://www.forhousing.co.uk>. Click on the contact us tab on the homepage and select report anti-social behaviour
- Form: You can complete a short form by visiting www.forhousing.co.uk/keeping-you-safe-anti-social-behaviour/#report
- Letter
- In person, whether this be in your home, a community space or office
- Through a third party such as your local councillor or someone else who represents you
- Telephone: 0300 123 55 22 open 24 hours a day
- Through the MyAccount + mobile app

Your local community safety officer will deal with your report and will be your main point of contact. If we need to, we will also take advice from a specialist community safety coordinator.

What you can do

Depending on the nature of the behaviour, first of all try having a friendly word with whoever is causing the problem. They may not be aware of the effect their behaviour is having and you may be able to resolve the matter between yourselves.

We don't recommend you do this if you feel intimidated or have been abused or threatened.

If you don't want to approach them, you could write to them. In either case:

- Be polite and calm
- Don't talk or write to them when you feel angry
- Make sure the discussion or letter is relevant to the current problem
- Be clear you are open to ways of resolving the problem – this may mean a compromise from both parties
- Don't get involved in an argument
- If threatened, don't retaliate

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What we will do when you report a problem

- We will acknowledge and triage your report within two working days. If you are reporting harassment, violence or threats we will action your report in one working day and a member of our team will arrange to discuss the problem with you face-to-face where possible
- If your problem involves harassment, including hate behaviour or domestic abuse we will attempt to meet with you within one working day. Once we have identified the alleged perpetrator we will attempt to interview them within one working day
- If your report does not include harassment, violence or threats we will attempt to contact you within five working days. Once we have identified the alleged perpetrator we will interview them within five working days, where appropriate
- We will keep you updated about what we are doing to resolve your problem
- Before we close the report we will attempt to discuss this with you and explain the reasons why

We will agree an action plan with you

Firstly, we will investigate the matter and, if possible, talk to those who you say are behaving in an unacceptable way. If we can't resolve the problem quickly and easily then, with your agreement, we may need more evidence. This might include:

- You and other witnesses keeping a diary
- Using a recording device
- Contacting the police and local authority
- Contacting other residents who may be able to provide information

What else will we do?

- Deal with your report in a positive, sensitive and confidential manner
- Give you the name of a member of staff who will be responsible for investigating your report - we will always let you know if someone else takes responsibility
- Take your concerns seriously and carry out a full investigation
- Only use information with the consent of the person providing it, unless there are good reasons not to do so, such as concerns about a child's welfare or safety
- Always offer to talk about the problem in private if you come to our offices
- Where possible, arrange for you to speak to a member of staff who is of the same sex or ethnic origin, if you feel more comfortable with this
- Explain to you what will happen in response to your report, how we will deal with it and what we will do to resolve the problem
- Make sure we provide the support you and any witnesses need
- Where appropriate apply to court for an emergency injunction in cases which involve violence or threats and where our legal advisors recommend this as the best course of action
- Explain the full meaning of any court orders and make sure all witnesses receive a copy of the information they need
- Aim to resolve your case within 13 weeks. If this is not possible, because we need to take legal action, we will refer your case to a specialist community safety coordinator. They will review your case and advise on how to progress including timescales

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Action we can take

Depending on the problem we will consider some or all of the following:

Prevention

If we need to, we may bring in other agencies such as social services. This might be to help deal with the root cause of a problem, for example, mental health difficulties or drug and alcohol abuse. Likewise, we may involve sport and youth projects to provide diversion and other activities to help deal with problems caused by children or young people.

Partnership working

Together we achieve more so we work with partner agencies to discuss problems in a certain area as well as about named individuals who might be involved in anti-social behaviour.

Good neighbour meeting

This is a type of mediation which brings together neighbours who are in conflict or disagreement with each other including some types of anti-social behaviour.

Restorative justice

Restorative justice brings together those harmed by an incident or conflict and those responsible for the harm. This enables everyone affected to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

Interviews and letters

Where we have evidence of anti-social behaviour, we will explain to those causing the problem that they are legally obliged to let their neighbours live quietly, peacefully and securely.

Acceptable Behaviour Agreement (ABA)

This is a voluntary written agreement between the person causing a problem, ForHousing, the police and other agencies such as the Youth Offending Service. It lists how a person is acting and makes them aware of how their behaviour affects others.

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Legal action we can take

If the problem continues, we can involve the UK courts to help protect your quality of life. Here are just some of the actions we can take.

Injunctions

We can apply to court for an order which sets out what someone must do, for example, not use threatening behaviour. An injunction can also specify what someone must do to address the underlying reasons for their behaviour. This might include, attending alcohol or drug support sessions. In serious cases we can obtain an order at very short notice.

Demotion of tenancy

This reduces the rights of a tenant which makes it easier to take further action if the anti-social behaviour continues.

Possession proceedings

This is where the courts give us the power to evict tenants from a ForHousing home. We will only do this when all other efforts have failed.



Promoting the service and successful outcomes

We take every opportunity to promote community safety including at community events and forums. We publicise the outcome of individual cases, including names where appropriate.

For the latest updates see the your community pages on www.forhousing.co.uk. We also use Twitter and Facebook. You can find contact details at the end of this handbook.

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Support for those affected

We are committed to supporting anyone affected by anti-social behaviour, including witnesses. Find out how on this page.

Regular and out of hours contact

We will contact you regularly and can also arrange support calls during the evenings.

24 hour reporting

You can call **0300 123 55 22** to report incidents of anti-social behaviour 24 hours a day.

If you ring outside of office hours, we will give you advice using our on-line services and take details of what's happened. The Community Safety Team will take any necessary action at the start of the next working day. You can also still email us or make reports through the MyAccount + app, during and out of normal office hours.

Other support

We can also make a referral to an external support agency such as Victim Support. If legal action is necessary, we will make sure you get all the support you need.

A copy of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy is available on our website or on request from any member of staff.

Equality and diversity

We aim to make sure the support we offer is equally accessible to everyone. Staff consider this as a core part of their duties.

Sharing information, data protection and confidentiality

We will treat any information you report to us about anti social behaviour in the strictest confidence. We won't use it for any other purpose without your consent unless there are concerns about child protection, vulnerable people or the safety and welfare of the wider community.



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More information about domestic abuse

Has this happened to you?

- Being punched, kicked or bitten
- Constantly put down or humiliated
- Kept without money
- Forced into sex
- Kept away from your family and friends
- Blamed for problems that aren't your fault
- Forced into marriage
- Honour based violence

What to do next

- Contact us (see back page) or if you feel you can, report it to the police
- Tell someone you trust what's happening to you such as a friend or neighbour
- Take copies of important papers such as your birth certificate, passport, benefit claim information, National Insurance Number, bank details and court orders
- Get copies made of your house and car keys. Try to have these packed or, if your belongings are regularly checked, then leave them with a neighbour
- Keep essential medicines together so you can collect them quickly
- Try to have some money saved and hidden somewhere safe
- Keep your mobile phone charged and topped up with credit
- If you are thinking of leaving, try to plan when will be the safest time to do so

See page 22 for a list of useful contacts



How we can help

- We will always put your safety and confidentiality and that of any family members first. You will be able to speak to a member of staff in a private and safe environment
- We will offer information and advice and put you in contact with specialist support such as the police's domestic violence unit
- We will make sure staff are aware of your needs, including your personal safety
- We will help you find alternative accommodation where appropriate
- We can help you stay in your current home by putting safety improvements in place such as extra security, emergency protection granted by the UK courts and out of hours support
- We may consider evicting individual tenants who are guilty of domestic abuse

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Domestic abuse – useful contacts

Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
0808 2000 247

Men's Advice Line

www.mensadvice.org.uk
0808 801 0327

Broken Rainbow UK

Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people experiencing domestic violence
www.galop.org.uk
0300 999 5428

Victim Support

www.victimsupport.org.uk
0808 168 9111

ChildLine

www.childline.org.uk
0800 1111

Karma Nirvana

Support for people experiencing honour crimes and forced marriages
www.karmanirvana.org.uk
0800 599 9247

BullyingUK

Part of family lives. Help with cyber bullying
www.familylives.org.uk
0808 800 2222

Respect Phonenumber:

Information and advice for domestic violence perpetrators
www.respectphonenumber.org.uk
0808 802 4040

Action on Elder Abuse

www.wearehourglass.org/
0808 808 8141

Police

Emergencies: 999
Non-emergencies: 101
Domestic violence or forced marriages
www.endthefear.co.uk
Crimestoppers www.crimestoppers-uk.org/

If you are concerned that someone you are in a relationship with may be abusive you can ask the police to check if they have a record of abuse. You can also ask the police to check if you are worried that someone you know is in an abusive relationship.

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More information about racial harassment and hate behaviour

Racial harassment is a crime.

Hate crimes and incidents come in many different forms. It can be because of hatred on the grounds of:

- Disability
- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or belief, including non-belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Alternative subculture

How to report a problem

Hate crime is a criminal offence. If you have experienced hate crime you should report it to the police:

Emergencies: **999**

Non-emergencies: **101**

Report online: **www.report-it.org.uk**

Alternatively you, or someone on your behalf, can report it directly to us.

How we can help

- Provide translation and interpretation services if you need them
- Bring in specialist outside support if needed
- Fill in and submit a hate behaviour report form - and with your permission, make a referral to the police
- Remove racist or offensive graffiti within one working day



How we will monitor standards and communicate performance

Our service standards explain what you can expect from ForHousing. We are passionate about providing high quality services and monitor performance in different ways.

This includes:

- Tenant satisfaction surveys
- Mystery shopping exercises
- Inspections
- Audits of how we deliver services

You can see the latest performance figures on our website and in various publications. We are committed to involving you in shaping the services we provide. That's why we consult you when we review the standards every two years to make sure they continue to meet your needs and expectations.

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Getting in touch

ForHousing 

You can get in touch online by visiting www.forhousing.co.uk to:



- Complete an online form
- Speak to us on Live Chat
- Download or log in to **MyAccount+**
- Book an appointment online, and we will ring you back to arrange a time and place that suites you

You can also speak to us by:



- Calling **0300 123 55 22**
- Visit our offices in Stockbridge Village and in Regent Street, Eccles

0300 numbers are charged at local call rates from both landline and mobile phones and can also be deducted from any inclusive free minutes you may have. This means it should cost you less to call us from a mobile.

Português

فارسي

Français

العربية

Čeština

Polski

If you need this information in an alternative language please call

 **0161 605 7260**

For other formats please call

 **0300 123 5522**