ForHousing

Help for people who live in ForHousing homes and neighbourhoods and are worried about anti-social behaviour

EasyRead version

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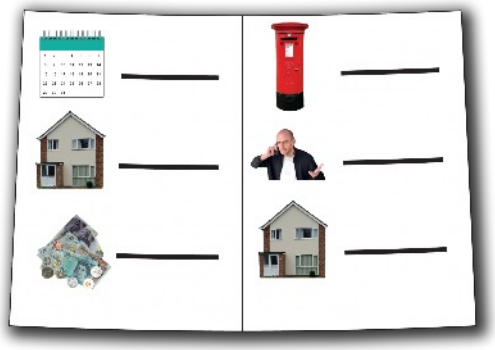
Introduction

We are ForHousing.

We own and manage more than 24,000 homes across the North West.

We think everyone should feel safe in and outside of their home.



This Easy Read information is to help people who live in ForHousing homes or neighbourhoods and are worried about anti-social behaviour.

We are here to help so please contact us if you feel unsafe in your community.

What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour is activity that harms a person, their community or their environment. Here are some examples:

Noise

- shouting and banging that happens a lot
- loud music, especially in the evening or at night

Threatening behaviour

Being **threatened** means you feel scared.

- loud, angry or threatening behaviour or language that scares you. This includes cyber bullying on social media and mobile phones

Illegal activities

- criminal activity which breaks the law such as drug dealing
- using a ForHousing home for illegal purposes such as handling stolen goods

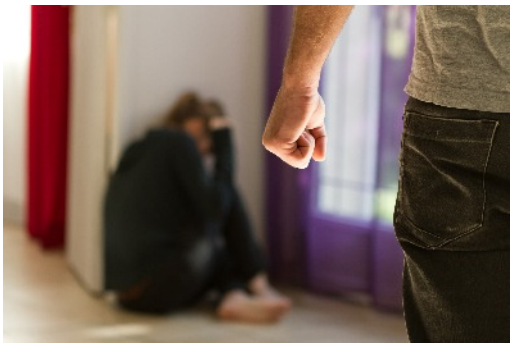
Domestic abuse

This can affect everyone and takes many forms such as:

- psychological
- physical

- sexual
- financial

- emotional



Here are some examples:

- problems with a partner you live with, or with one or more members of your family

- threats of violence or actual violence such as forced marriage or honour-based violence

There is more information about domestic abuse on page 27.

Sorting out problems

We will always do our best to sort out any problems.

But not all annoying behaviours that happen around your home or in your community are anti-social behaviours.

These things are not anti-social behaviours:

- when you fall out with family members or friends or neighbours – unless there is a fear of harm

- one-off parties and barbecues

- everyday noise such as babies crying, children playing or people moving about inside their home

- arguments about car parking spaces

But you can still tell us if the nuisance is persistent or is happening at an unreasonable time.

Racial harassment and hate behaviour

Tell us or talk to the police if you suffer harassment or hate behaviour because of your:

- racial background
- age
- religion
- sexuality
- disability
- gender
- for belonging to an alternative or subculture such as emo, goth or punk

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

There is more about racial harassment and hate behaviour on page 35.

What we expect you to do

We try to be the best landlord we can be.

We expect you to follow the rules of your tenancy agreement.

That means you must make 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 sleep during the day and carry out daily jobs at different times to yours.

Here are some tips for being a good neighbour:

- respect your environment by keeping the neighbourhood clean, tidy and free from anti-social behaviour

- try to work out local problems in a friendly way

- respect your neighbours and their homes, no matter their religion, race, ability, culture or beliefs

- look out for older, vulnerable 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

Damage to property

We respect your home and know you do too.

If anyone damages a home on purpose, we will act and we can start legal proceedings such as applying to court for an injunction.

We try to spend money carefully and in ways that benefit communities the most.

That means we will ask people to pay for any repairs.

Contact us if you are worried about anyone causing damage on purpose.

Protecting colleagues

We expect people and organisations working for us to treat you fairly. We expect you to treat them fairly.

No one should have to deal with threats, intimidation or abuse.

We will take action against anyone who uses threats, intimidation or abuse towards anyone working on our behalf.

What if the anti-social behaviour comes from people who are not ForHousing tenants?

We will work with the police, the local authority and other housing providers to act against anyone committing anti-social behaviour.

We are allowed to protect people who are not ForHousing tenants from unacceptable behaviour that may occur in the local community.

What you can do about anti-social behaviour

Anyone can report anti-social behaviour. You do not have to be a ForHousing tenant.

1. Contact the person who is causing the problem

If you feel safe, first try having a friendly word with whoever is causing the problem.

They may not know how their behaviour is affecting you and you may be able to resolve the matter between yourselves.

If you feel scared or they abuse or threaten you, you could write to them.

If you speak to them or write to them:

- be polite and calm
- do not talk or write to them when you feel angry
- focus only on the current problem
- be clear you want to try to work through the problem. This may mean some give and take from you both
- don't get into an argument
- if threatened, don't fight back

2. Tell us at ForHousing

We are committed to supporting anyone affected by anti-social behaviour, including witnesses.

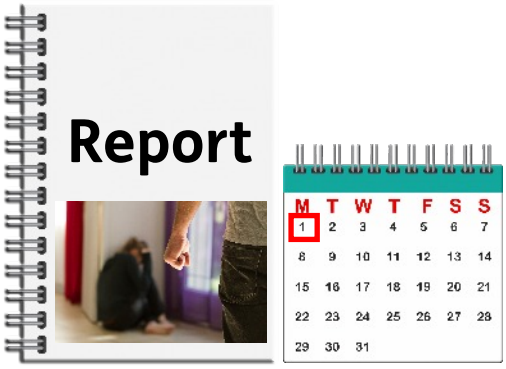
There are lots ways you can contact us.

They are listed on page 41.

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

We will let you know we have your report within 2 working days.

If your report is about harassment, violence or threats: we will action your report in 1 working day and a member of our team will try to discuss the problem with you face-to-face.



If your problem is about hate behaviour or domestic abuse: we will try to meet with you within 1 working day.

When we know the name of the **alleged perpetrator** we will try to interview them within 1 working day if it is safe to do so

An **alleged perpetrator** is the person you say has abused you.

If your report does not include harassment, violence or threats we will try to contact you within 5 working days.

When we know who the alleged perpetrator is we will aim to interview them within 5 working days.

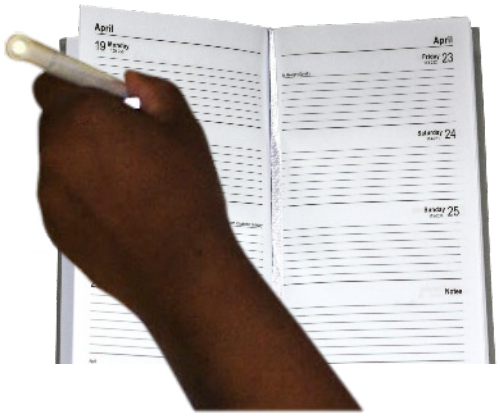
We will keep you updated about what we are doing to resolve your problem.

Before we close the report we will talk to you about it and explain the reasons why.

What we will do when you report a problem

We will try to talk to those people who you say are behaving in an unacceptable way.

If we cannot settle the problem quickly and easily we may need more **evidence**.



Evidence may be:

- asking you and other people who have seen the behaviour to keep a diary
- ask you to use a recording device

- ask you to contact the police and local authority
- contacting other residents who can provide information

What else we will do

- deal with your report in a positive, sensitive and confidential manner
- give you the name of a member of staff who will look into your report

- only use information with your consent 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

- check if you will feel more comfortable speaking to a member of staff who is of the same sex or ethnic origin
- explain to you what will happen next

- provide the support you and any witnesses need

- if needed, apply to court for an **emergency injunction**

  An **emergency injunction** is a temporary court order to prevent serious harm in the immediate future

  This is for cases where there is violence or threats and where our legal advisors say this is the best course of action

- explain what any court orders mean and make sure all witnesses have a copy of the information they need

- try 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

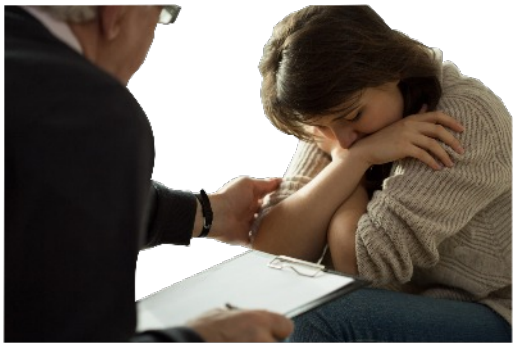
  They will review your case and advise on what will happen next

Action we can take

What we do depends on the problem. We can look at:

Prevention

If we need to, we can bring in other agencies such as social services.



This might be to help deal with the root cause of a problem, such as mental health difficulties or drug and alcohol abuse.

Or we may bring in sport and youth projects to provide diversion and other activities to help deal with problems caused by children or young people.

Partnership

We can do more by working together with partner agencies to discuss problems in a certain area.

Good neighbour meeting

Good neighbour meetings are a type of mediation.

They bring together neighbours who disagree with each other including some types of anti-social behaviour.

Restorative justice

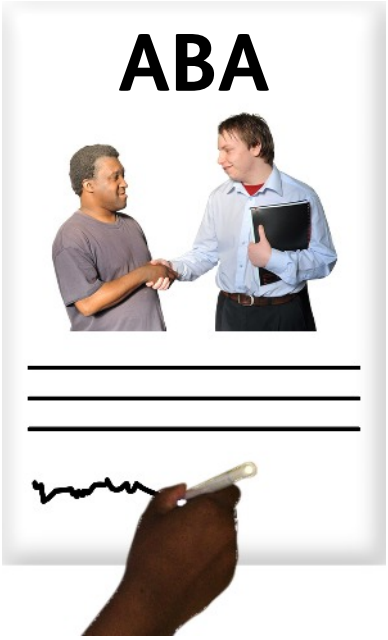
Restorative justice brings together those harmed by an incident or conflict and those who caused the harm.

This helps everyone affected to play a part in fixing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

Interviews and letters

Where we have evidence of anti-social behaviour, we will explain to people causing the problem that the law says they must let their neighbours live quietly, peacefully and securely.

Acceptable Behaviour Agreement (ABA)



An ABA is a voluntary written agreement that lists how a person is acting and makes them aware of how their behaviour affects others.

The agreement is between the person causing a problem, ForHousing, the police and other agencies such as the Youth Offending Service.

Legal action we can take

If the problem continues, we can involve the UK courts to help protect your quality of life.

Here are some of the legal actions we can take:

Injunctions

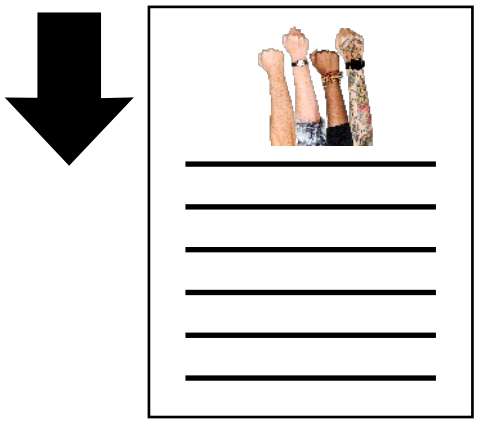
We can apply to court for an order which says what someone must do.

For example, not use threatening behaviour.

An injunction can also say that someone must work on the underlying reasons for their behaviour.

This might include going to alcohol or drug support sessions.

In serious cases we can get an order very quickly.



Demotion of tenancy

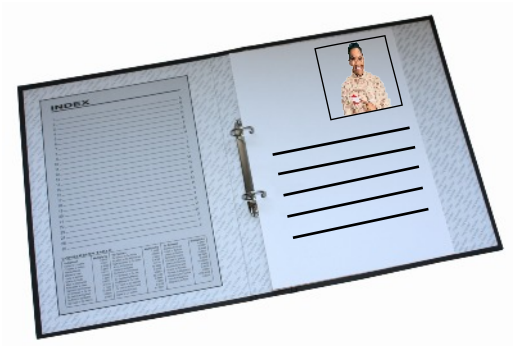
Demotion of tenancy lowers the rights of a tenant which makes it easier to take further action if the anti-social behaviour continues.

Possession proceedings

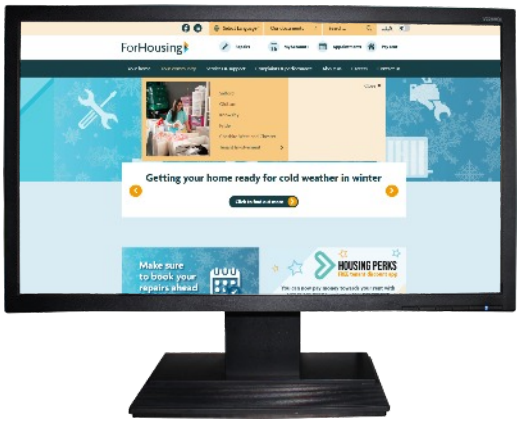
This is where the courts give us the power to evict tenants from a ForHousing home. We will only do this when all other efforts have failed.

How we advertise the good work we do

We promote community safety at community events and forums.



We share the outcome of individual cases, including names where appropriate.



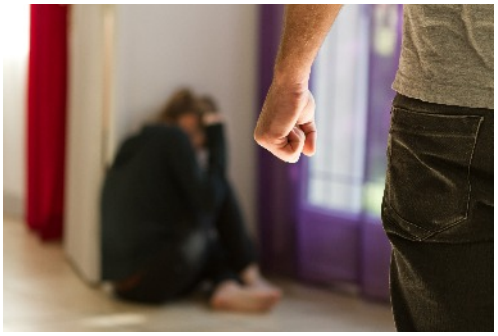
For the latest updates go to **www.forhousing.co.uk**

We also use facebook.

There is more information at the end of this handbook.

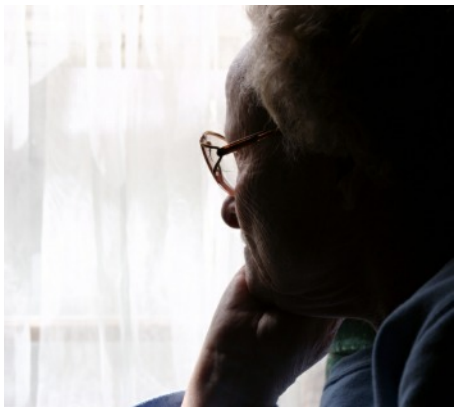
More information about domestic abuse

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 page 41 or if you feel you can, report it to the police

- Tell someone you trust what is happening to you such as a friend or neighbour

- Make sure you have copies of important papers such as:
  - your birth certificate
  - passport
  - benefit claim information
  - National Insurance Number
  - bank details and court orders

- Make sure you have copies 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 important 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

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 link you with specialist support such as the police's domestic violence unit

- We will make sure staff know about your needs, including your personal safety

- We will help you find other accommodation if needed

- We can help you stay in your current home by adding safety improvements such as extra security, emergency protection granted by the UK courts and out of hours support

- We may look at evicting individual tenants who are guilty of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse – useful contacts

Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline

Website:
www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Telephone:
0808 2000 247

Men's Advice Line

Website:
www.mensadviceline.org.uk

Telephone:
0808 801 0327

Broken Rainbow UK

Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people experiencing domestic violence

Website:
www.galop.org.uk

Telephone:
0300 999 5428

Victim Support

Website:
www.victimsupport.org.uk

Telephone:
0808 168 9111

ChildLine

Website:
www.childline.org.uk

Telephone:
0800 1111

Karma Nirvana

Support for people experiencing honour crimes and forced marriages

Website:
www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Telephone:
0800 599 9247

BullyingUK

Part of family lives. Help with cyber bullying

Website:
www.familylives.org.uk

Telephone:
0808 800 2222

Respect Phoneline

Information and advice for domestic violence perpetrators

Website:
www.respectphoneline.org.uk

Telephone:
0808 802 4040

Action on Elder Abuse

Website:
www.wearehourglass.org/

Telephone:
0808 808 8141

Police

Emergencies: **999**

Non-emergencies: **101**

Domestic violence or forced marriages

Wesbite:
www.endthefear.co.uk

Crimestoppers

Website:
www.crimestoppers-uk.org/

If you are worried 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.

More information about racial harassment and hate behaviour

Racial harassment is a crime.

Hate crime is a criminal offence.

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

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**

Or you, or someone acting for you, can report it directly to us.

How we can help

We can:

- provide translation and interpretation services if you need them
- bring in specialist outside support if you need it

- 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 check how well we are doing

We have service standards that explain what you can expect from ForHousing.

We will check our services and how we are doing in different ways.

This includes:

- asking our tenants if they are satisfied
- 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 want to involve you in shaping our services to you. 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.

Equality and diversity

We aim to make sure the support we offer is equally accessible to everyone.

Staff consider this as an important 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.

Getting in touch

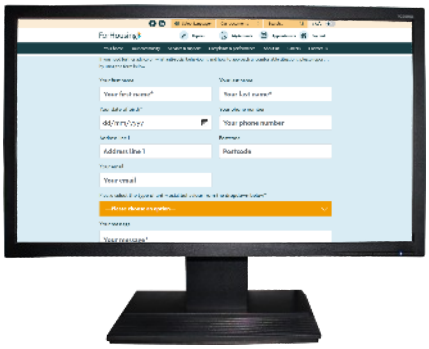
Our friendly team wants to listen to you.

Everyone has the right to contact us or any other relevant group to help sort out a problem in a peaceful and friendly way.

We're all for keeping things simple.

Website

You can read about us here:
www.forhousing.co.uk



You can complete a short form by visiting:
www.forhousing.co.uk/keeping-you-safe-anti-social-behaviour/#report

Telephone

0300 123 55 22

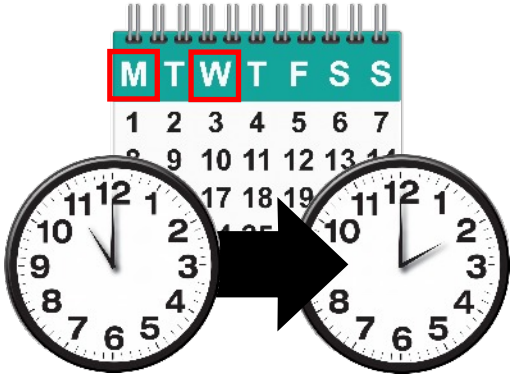
0300 numbers are charged at local rate from both landline and mobile phones and can also be deducted from any inclusive free minutes you may have. This means it should cost you less to call us from a mobile.

You can ring 24 hours a day.

If you ring outside of office hours, we will give you advice using our online 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.

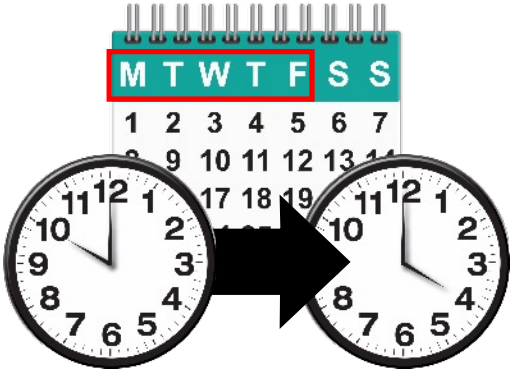
Speak to us on Live Chat:
www.amillan.co.uk/forhousing-web-chatbot/



Visit our offices

Stockbridge Village,
L28 1NR

Open Monday and Wednesday
11am to 2pm



Regent Street,
Eccles, M30 0BP.

Open Monday to Friday
10am to 4pm.

Use the MyAccount+ mobile app to email us or make reports.

The easiest way to manage your tenancy is through the MyAccount+ mobile app. It's the fastest way to contact us, report and track repairs — and much more too.

You can also make rent payments, send repair requests, view rent statements, report and track repairs online.

How to download the app

On the Apple App Store or Play Store on your mobile device search MyAccount+

Follow us on Facebook

Stockbridge Village
www.facebook.com/ForHousingSBV/

Fitton Hill
www.facebook.com/ForHousingFH

Salford area
www.facebook.com/ForHousingSalford/

Cheshire West and Chester
www.facebook.com/forhousingCWandC/

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.

Credits

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