

## Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Policy Category	Housing
Policy Reference Number	HG_GRP_HSG_008
Version Number	5.0
Date Effective From	11 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Applicable to	Colleagues, agency workers and volunteers working in Operations (rented and supported, including specialist care services); Home Ownership (including Leasehold); agency managed properties (subject to the terms of management agreements in place); and mid-market rent.
Policy Owner	Regional Director
Policy Author	Policy Business Partner
Approved by	Board
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Distribution	Internal: All Home Group colleagues, volunteers and agency workers. Communicated via Home World Intranet  External: Summary on Home Group website. Full policy available on request to Home Group policy team
Key search terms	Anti-social behaviour; safeguarding; harassment; violence; drugs and substance misuse; hate crime
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the full version history of this policy, click <a href="#">HERE</a> (<i>see back page</i>)</li> <li>Please avoid referring to printed versions of this policy or saving it on shared/ individual drives. All policies and supporting resources can be found under 'Policy and Procedures' on the intranet. Printed and saved versions may quickly go out of date- contact <a href="mailto:policy@homegroup.org.uk">policy@homegroup.org.uk</a> for support and advice.</li> </ul>	

## 1.0 Policy statement

Living where there is anti-social behaviour can be a horrendous experience, causing widespread misery to individuals and communities. We want customers to peacefully enjoy, and to feel safe in their homes. We understand the devastating impact that anti-social behaviour can have on people's lives. We do not tolerate anti-social behaviour and have robust systems in place to deal with it in the most effective and sympathetic way.

We are committed to preventing anti-social behaviour wherever possible and tackling cases effectively. We acknowledge that anti-social behaviour can affect anyone regardless of gender, sexual orientation, social group, class, age, race, disability, religion or geographic location and that some individuals and groups may be at greater risk or have specific needs.

We make sure that colleagues are highly trained to recognise cases of anti-social behaviour and respond quickly and sensitively. By using technology such as noise apps, or offering mediation, and monitoring how effective all our tools and systems are, we are committed to resolving cases as speedily as possible, whilst taking account of individual needs.

We want our communities to be safe environments, where people want to live - as outlined in our 'Building homes, independence and aspirations' Strategy. Community patches enable colleagues to build their knowledge of local communities, helping to prevent anti-social behaviour and providing a clear point of contact for customers.

We recognise how powerful and valuable working in partnership can be and when anti-social behaviour incidents occur, we utilise these relationships at the earliest opportunity.

This policy reflects best practice and helps us deliver key elements of our customer promise, which is to:

- Provide you with a safe place to live
- Deliver you a reliable repairs service
- Care about you
- Help communities grow
- Tell you where your money goes
- Work together with you and our partners

Our [Anti-Social Behaviour Commitments](#) provide more details about how we will keep our customer promise in relation to anti-social behaviour.

This policy complies with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements at the time of publishing, including but not limited to:

Housing (Scotland) Act 2001; Housing (Scotland) Act 2014; Anti-Social Behaviour (Scotland) Act 2004; Civic Government (Scotland) Act; Hate Crime & Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021; Scottish Social Housing Charter.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998; Environmental Protection Act 1990; Dangerous Dogs Act 1989 and 1991; Data Protection Act 2018; Housing Act 1988; Housing Act 1996 (as amended by

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003); Social Housing Regulation Act 2023; Regulatory Standards for Social Housing (England); Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014; Protection from Harassment Act 1997; Equality Act 2010, Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and Human Rights Act 1998.

Feedback from colleagues and customers (including those who have experienced anti-social behaviour) also helped shape this policy.

## 2.0 Policy scope

This policy sets out our approach and standards of practice including how we take a proactive approach and swift action, as well as how we provide support and learn from incidents.

It applies to colleagues, agency workers and volunteers working in customer and communities (rented and supported services); regulated care services; Home Ownership (including Leasehold); agency managed properties (subject to the terms of management agreements in place), and mid-market rent.

Information for colleagues affected by issues such as bullying, harassment or domestic abuse can be found in our Human Resources policies and procedures.

This policy should be used in conjunction with many of our other policies and supporting resources, including our Allocations Policy, Tenure policy, Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy, Communities and Neighbourhood Management Policy, Data Protection Policy, Support Practice Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Domestic Abuse Policy.

Further detail and specific guidance on anti-social behaviour can be found in our supporting resources on Homeworld.

## 3.0 Standards

### Standard 1: Accessible services and communication

Complaints about anti-social behaviour are always taken seriously, and our anti-social behaviour policy is publicly available.

We offer multiple ways for customers and others affected by anti-social behaviour to tell us what's happening and access information that might be helpful to them. This includes telephone and web-based contact methods, presenting information in different languages and formats such as Easy Read and large print.

We understand that whilst some behaviours are a nuisance to some individuals, they do not meet the definition of anti-social behaviour. We offer advice and support to customers on handling problems with their neighbours that do not constitute anti-social behaviour, in line with our Neighbourhood Management procedures.

We are clear about whether reported behaviour does or does not meet the definition of anti-social behaviour and we inform customers in writing if the reported behaviour cannot be considered anti-social.

Where the reported behaviour meets the definition of anti-social behaviour we provide updates to complainants at least every ten working days on the progress of any ongoing investigation or action being taken to address it.

### **Standard 2: Data protection and anonymous reports**

We value customers' privacy and understand that people might sometimes feel apprehensive about sharing their names or other personal details with us when reporting anti-social behaviour. Whilst we accept anonymous reports, and do our best to investigate and resolve them, it may be more difficult for us to do this and provide ongoing updates if the complainant isn't willing to provide their details.

Any personal details shared with us in connection with an anti-social behaviour report are stored and handled securely in line with our [Data Protection Policy](#).

### **Standard 3: Taking a proactive approach**

We proactively work to prevent anti-social behaviour by designing new homes and improving existing ones to discourage anti-social behaviour wherever possible. We work with local authorities and other partners to create and maintain safe shared spaces.

We encourage customers to resolve issues themselves when safe and appropriate to do so, and provide access to mediation services where this might be helpful.

We conduct area inspections in accordance with our [Communities and Neighbourhood Management policy](#). We use these as an opportunity to identify anti-social behaviour affecting a community and take steps proactively to address it e.g. taking action to remove graffiti or address fly-tipping.

Individual applications for housing are carefully assessed in line with our [Allocations policy](#) to ensure suitability. We take time to alert customers to their rights and responsibilities, as set out in tenancy, licence and lease agreements.

We emphasise that engaging in anti-social behaviour can lead to legal action being taken against a customer, potentially resulting in loss of their home.

### **Standard 4: Taking swift action**

We take all reports of anti-social behaviour seriously and act swiftly to protect individuals and communities. We triage reports of anti-social behaviour to determine the right approach.

### Risk assessment

We use a Risk Assessment Matrix to prioritise the most serious cases. We take action to initiate an investigation of the issue within timescales set out in [appendix A](#) and update the risk assessment regularly and as needed. Customers' individual needs and potential vulnerabilities are taken into account in drafting and reviewing the risk assessment. This helps us to adapt our approach to best meet customers' needs.

### Action planning

We work with the customer to develop an action plan for addressing the anti-social behaviour in all cases. We listen carefully to the customer and ensure that actions are designed with their needs and preferences in mind wherever possible, taking account of any risks that have been identified.

We aim to intervene as early as possible to try to stop problem behaviour before it escalates. The intervention we use varies according to the type and seriousness of the anti-social behaviour and is decided on a case-by-case basis. This may include using warnings and Acceptable Behaviour Agreements and based on an incremental approach. In serious cases, where there is evidence to show a clear breach of tenancy, licence or lease terms and conditions, we may seek to undertake immediate enforcement action against the perpetrator of the anti-social behaviour using the legal powers available to us as described below.

When individuals are assessed as being at serious or immediate risk, we consider options for urgent action to keep victims of anti-social behaviour and vulnerable perpetrators safe. This can include offering temporary or permanent alternative accommodation in some circumstances, and in line with our Allocations policy.

### Working with partners and using legal powers

We collaborate with agencies, such as the police and local authorities, and use professional witnesses to validate reports where appropriate. We use all the legal powers available to us to address anti-social behaviour. Enforcement actions, including ending tenancies and evictions, are taken when there is sufficient evidence. In Scotland, this includes the powers outlined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

We recognise that some necessary actions might take longer to implement, especially where application to court is required. Where there are delays to taking action needed to resolve an issue, we consider interim actions that might be needed to reduce risks and protect people affected by anti-social behaviour.

### Dissatisfaction with response to anti-social behaviour

In England, victims of persistent anti-social behaviour, who are dissatisfied with the response to their reports of anti-social behaviour, have the right to ask for a multi-agency review of their case. Certain locally set thresholds must be met for cases to qualify for an Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review (also known as the Community Trigger).

All customers who are dissatisfied with our response to their reports of anti-social behaviour also have the right to make a complaint following our [Complaints, Compliments and Comments policy](#).

### Recording and closing cases

All instances of anti-social behaviour and associated actions are recorded in our internal contact management system, and we ensure fair, unbiased responses. Cases may be closed if no further action can be taken or if parties do not engage with our offers of support.

#### **Standard 5: Adopting a supportive approach**

We offer and provide ongoing support when working with victims, witnesses, and perpetrators, including regular contact and referral to other agencies where appropriate. We aim to identify and take steps to address issues such as mental health problems, learning disabilities, domestic abuse and drug and alcohol misuse where these may be underlying factors affecting behaviour or placing individuals at additional risk. This might include making reasonable adjustments to our processes to accommodate individual needs in line with our Person-Centred Service Delivery policy.

We recognise the links between reports of anti-social behaviour and instances of domestic abuse. Our colleagues are trained to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and respond in line with our Domestic Abuse policy.

We also acknowledge that reports of anti-social behaviour connected to households where there are children or adults with vulnerabilities living, may indicate a need for safeguarding action. Colleagues are trained to be aware of this and to make safeguarding referrals as required in line with our Safeguarding policy.

Our Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Policies are available on our website [here](#).

#### **Standard 6: Regulated care and services for older people**

We acknowledge the unique challenges of anti-social behaviour in our care services and services for older people, including retirement leasehold. This includes potentially higher risk of discriminatory behaviour towards people with disabilities, or other protected characteristics.

We emphasise the importance of engaging with the community to foster understanding and cooperation. This helps to protect our customers, whilst meeting our commitment to enabling everyone to live peacefully in their homes.

We recognise challenges that may arise as customers' needs change for different reasons such as progressive illnesses like dementia. This can affect how the customer's behaviour is perceived by neighbours, especially if the individual lacks sufficient support.

We fulfil our customer promise to 'care about you' by working with specialist agencies locally to help make sure that everyone gets the right support to meet their needs.

All incidents are documented, and we address community complaints effectively, ensuring clear communication channels are established and maintained. This helps to promote the safety and well-being of customers while encouraging positive community relations.



**Standard 7: Learning and development**

We emphasise a commitment to fostering a culture of sharing best practices and learning from each other to effectively address anti-social behaviour. This includes publishing successful prevention actions, enforcement, or other initiatives.

Due to the range of skills required, we provide relevant training for all colleagues including annual mandatory training for our colleagues in Rented (operation managers, senior housing managers and housing managers) utilising both internal and external resources to promote consistency in our approach when handling cases of anti-social behaviour.

**Standard 8: Taking action against, harassment, threats or acts of violence**

We have a zero-tolerance policy towards harassment, threats and acts of violence. We take full account of any hate dimension when investigating incidents. All identifiable incidents we believe to be motivated by hate will be reported to relevant authorities. Criminal offences, including harassment, will be reported to the police.

We provide training for colleagues in customer and communities services (rented, supported and leasehold) and regulated care services on de-escalation techniques.

**Standard 9: Drug and substance misuse**

At Home Group, we ensure customers understand our drug and substance misuse policy and the related terms of their tenure agreement. We evaluate risks linked to community impact, harm to individuals and severity of each case.

We do not tolerate the production or dealing of illegal substances on Home Group properties and will take action to the fullest extent of the law to deal with it. We take concerns about use of illegal substances seriously and work with police and other partners to prevent it in line with terms and conditions of tenancy agreements.

Our supported services create local procedures based on a pre-defined framework in accordance with this policy. We offer support in line with our Support Practice policy to customers who need support in relation to drug and substance misuse, including referral to specialist agencies where appropriate.

We also work with local authorities, police, and community groups to manage drug misuse in communities to help maintain a safe and drug-free environment.

**Standard 10: Noise**

We recognise that excessive levels of noise can have a significant impact on customers enjoyment of their homes. We aim to foster good relationships between customers and wherever we can, we offer mediation to help settle noise disputes.

We offer technology, including a Noise App tool or recording equipment, to help customers gather evidence of the noise nuisance they are experiencing. This can assist us to inform a proportionate response with the evidence collected.

Please see [appendix B](#) for a list of noise examples that are classed as neighbourhood management issues and not anti-social behaviour.

## Standard 11: Value for money

We publish information on our website [here](#) about how we spend income from rent and other charges, including in relation to housing management services and tackling anti-social behaviour. We are committed to improving how we monitor and manage the costs associated with anti-social behaviour to ensure we work as efficiently and effectively as we can. This includes using technology where it's appropriate to support our approach to anti-social behaviour and minimising the costs relating to litigation and legal challenges.

### Appendix A

The following timescales relate to the time frame within which the housing manager must contact the customer to begin the investigation and create an initial action plan depending on the level of risk.

Our timescales are:

**PERSONAL** – 1 working day

**NUISANCE** – 3 working days

**ENVIRONMENTAL** – 10 working days.

Where the risk assessment score is high this means the incident has a high impact on the individual and is therefore categorised as **PERSONAL**.

**The definition of PERSONAL:** *either deliberately targeted at an individual or group or having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large.*

Where the risk assessment score is moderate this means the incident is not targeted at an individual but will impact upon other people and is likely to be an ongoing problem. It is therefore categorised as **NUISANCE**.

**The definition of NUISANCE:** *where the behaviour affects the local community in general rather than individual victims.*

Where the risk assessment score is low this means the incident affects a neighbourhood or a community. It will have an impact upon a wider group of people, is likely to be an ongoing problem and is categorised as **ENVIRONMENTAL**.

**The definition of ENVIRONMENTAL:** *where the effects of ASB have an impact on the natural, built and social environment.*

### Appendix B

We would usually categorise the following noise related matters as **neighbourhood management issues** and **not** anti-social behaviour.

Examples include (list not exhaustive):

- Banging doors or closing doors within reason
- Noise created by children playing
- Young children or babies crying which don't raise any safeguarding concerns.
- Reasonable day to day living noise
- Moving furniture
- Mowing the lawn



- DIY in reasonable hours
- Dogs barking if it is an isolated incident or for a short period and is not unreasonable.
- Singing / whistling and talking loudly
- One off parties, celebrations, barbecues or household gatherings at reasonable times
- Using household appliances such as washing machines, vacuum cleaners, showers or toilets
- Walking around the property, including going up and down the stairs

## Key definitions

Word / phrase	Definition
Anti-social behaviour	<p>Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person.</p> <p><b>Anti-social behaviour:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hate related incidents (e.g., based on race, sexual orientation, gender, disability or belief)</li> <li>• Verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation or threatening behaviour</li> <li>• Vandalism and damage to property</li> <li>• Prostitution, sexual acts, kerb crawling</li> <li>• Criminal behaviour including using/dealing drugs</li> <li>• Litter, graffiti, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles</li> <li>• Excessive noise particularly late at night</li> <li>• Misuse of shared areas including but not limited to, not disposing of rubbish or litter, fighting, obstructing areas with objects, or intimidating other people</li> <li>• Animal nuisance, including dog fouling and excessively barking dogs</li> </ul>
Anti-social Behaviour Case Review (Community Trigger) – England only	<p>A legal right for people in England, which gives victims of persistent antisocial behaviour reported to any of the main responsible agencies (such as the council, police, housing provider) the right to request a multi-agency case review where a local threshold is met.</p> <p>Agencies, including local authorities, the police, local health teams and registered providers of social housing have a duty to carry out a case review when someone requests one and their case meets a locally defined threshold.</p> <p>Each area chooses a lead agency to manage the process. This is usually the council or police.</p>

Hate crime	<p>Legal definition <b>England &amp; Wales:</b> Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity. For more information click <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Legal definition <b>Scotland:</b> Any crime which is understood by the victim or any other person as being motivated (wholly or partly) by malice or ill will towards a social group. For more information click <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
Hate Incident	<b>College of Policing definition:</b> Any non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race/religion or perceived religion / sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation/disability or perceived disability/transgender or perceived to be transgender.
Harassment	Causing alarm or distress to another person and putting a person in fear of violence.
Risk Assessment Matrix	A risk assessment tool designed by the Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group and police to identify vulnerable victims, witnesses and complainants.
Shared spaces	Spaces associated with a registered social landlord's homes and used by their tenants that are not the responsibility of the landlord – for example, roads and parks that are the responsibility of the local council. Shared spaces are not the same as communal areas where landlords have direct responsibilities for ensuring their safety and maintenance.

## 4.0 Supporting documents

In order to comply with Home Group's approach to **Tackling Anti-Social behaviour**, and achieve the standards set out above, the relevant processes and policy compliance notes must be followed in line with stated roles and responsibilities. Colleagues should refer to our internal index for the full list of supporting documents.

## 5.0 Version history

Version Number	Effective Date	Amendment made by	Version approved by	Description of Changes
2.4	November 2013			New group wide policy
3	2016			Full policy review

3.1	May 2017			Slight amendment to wording in standard 11: providing support
3.2	November 2017			Updated standard 15 local procedures for drug misuse for new job roles
3.3	February 2018			Re-branded
4.0	26 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	Policy Business Partner	Board	Strengthened wording of policy statement to include reference to seriousness of ASB, customer pledge and new initiatives such as community patches. Reduced number of standards from 19 to 9 to improve clarity of approach. Increased focus of proactive / preventative measures, and good communication, including publishing examples of good practice.
4.1	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Policy Business Partner	Director of Housing and Communities	Desk top review completed, and risk assessment approved 21.1.21.
4.2	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2022	Policy Business Partner	Director of Housing and Communities	Desk top review completed, and risk assessment approved 2.2.22. Policy owner job title amended.
4.3	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	Policy Business Partner	Director of Housing and Communities	Desk top review completed, and risk assessment approved 22.3.23.
4.4	13 <sup>th</sup> April 2023	Policy Business Partner	Director of Housing and Communities	References to Live Smart removed; New Models of Care terminology changed to specialist care services; up to date domestic abuse legislation added; domestic abuse key definitions updated; names of associated policies updated to reflect changes made to approved policies. Reference to Anti-Social Pledge changed to Anti-Social Commitments.
4.5	8 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Policy Business Partner	Director of Housing and Communities	Desk top review completed, and risk assessment approved 23.2.24. Policy name change made to section 2 (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy)
4.6	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024	Policy Business Partner	N/A	New Legislation – Hate Crime & Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021 added; Legal definitions of Hate Crime added for both England & Wales, and Scotland;
4.7	22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2024	Policy Business Partner	N/A	With the release of the new Domestic Abuse policy, this has been removed from ASB.

5.0	11 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	Policy Business Partner	Home Group Board	<p>New policy standards added on noise nuisance and ASB in care services and services for older people</p> <p>Standard 4 – Taking swift action has been expanded to give more detail and separated into sub-headings</p> <p>Additional detail in relation to drugs and substances misuse and action to tackle ASB including community trigger.</p> <p>Definition for Hate incident added in the key definition table.</p> <p>Added timeframes for responding to reports of ASB to appendix 1</p> <p>Appendix 2 added – definition and examples of neighbourhood management issues falling outside of ASB definition</p> <p>Simplified structure and added links to related policies.</p>
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