



ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



"Delivering Excellent Housing Services"

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Tackling and preventing ASB within our communities is an important priority for Ashfield Homes, however we cannot do this alone and we need your help to make our communities pleasant places to live, work and visit.



What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

ASB is any behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress.

Examples of this can include: constantly playing loud music, verbal abuse, threats, harassment, shouting, swearing, door slamming, arguing, barking dogs, vandalism and frequently carrying out noisy car repairs.



Ashfield Homes will not tolerate ASB within our communities.

Tenants of Ashfield District Council have signed a tenancy agreement which is a legal contract, agreeing not to take part in ASB, and to take responsibility for their own behaviour, and for anyone living with them or visiting them.

We will investigate all reports of ASB involving Council tenants and work with partners such as the Police and Social Services to stop this behaviour in our communities.

How Can I Make Sure I am a Considerate Neighbour?

Most neighbours won't mind the odd noisy occasion like a party or some DIY, but if it happens over and over again, it becomes a problem. Think about what you are doing, and how it could affect others.

Here are some ideas for being a good neighbour:

- Inform your neighbours in advance if you are having a party
- Try to keep the noise from your stereo or TV down
- Encourage friends, lifts and taxis to use the doorbell, not their car horn, and not to shout to you from outside your home
- Make sure your pets are well looked-after and do not cause a disturbance to others
- Make sure house and car alarms, and any security lights are working properly and are not likely to go off in the middle of the night



Anti-Social Behaviour

What Can I do About my Nightmare Neighbours?

It is important to remember that your neighbours might not be meaning to cause a disturbance, it may simply be that there's a difference in your lifestyle and routines. The neighbour may not know that they are causing a problem. The neighbour may have problems of their own which are causing them to behave in the way they are.

Think about why they may be acting in this way. Some things to think about are:

- A lot of shouting or screaming may point to violence within a relationship
- Comings and goings late at night may suggest they work shifts – perhaps as a nurse or taxi driver
- A garden full of rubbish may suggest that they are not physically able to tidy up or carry out repairs

Think carefully about whether your neighbours are a nightmare or whether they are just different to you – what is part of your normal routine e.g. children shouting and screaming early in the morning, or playing football in the street may be irritating to them too!



Letting Your Neighbour Know There is a Problem

The first step is to let your neighbours know there's a problem. Often cases can be resolved informally after letting your neighbour know that their behaviour is causing a problem and talking things through with them. Be polite as they might not even realise they're causing a disturbance. Don't storm around, wait until you are calm and then go round to ask them if they could find the time to talk to you about the problem.



Remember if you go and talk to your neighbours about the problem:

- Stay calm and quietly spoken
- Listen to the other person's point of view
- Don't shout at them. Stay in control
- Explain the problem
- Don't interrupt the other person when they are speaking
- If they cannot be reasoned with, calmly leave

I've Spoken to the Neighbour, but the Situation Hasn't Improved. What Next?

If you continue to experience problems, please contact your Housing Management Advisor straight away who will advise on the best course of action to take. Our employees can arrange appointments with the person causing nuisance to advise them of the consequences should they fail to stop the nuisance that is being caused.

Please see our Service Standard or our 'Tenant's Guide to' leaflet for more information.

Without Evidence, We Cannot Act. Completing Diary Sheets

When you report ASB, you may be asked to complete a 'Record of Anti-Social Behaviour' – a detailed diary of events that can be used as basis for evidence so that we can understand exactly what has happened over a period of time, and the effect that the ASB has had on you in order for us to take the most appropriate action to stop the problem.

- **Who** was there
- **Where** did it happen
- **When** did it happen - time and date
- **What** happened? It is important that you write down everything that has been said, including swear words.
- **How** did it make you feel?
Were you • upset, • frightened • angry?

If you are not good at keeping written notes, your Housing Management Advisor can discuss alternative ways of recording evidence, for example, we may be able to provide you with a dictaphone.

What Happens Next?

Once returned, diary sheets are reviewed to see what evidence they provide of nuisance. You may be asked to monitor the situation further or advised that based on the information, there has been no breach of the tenancy agreement.



Further Action

If there has been a problem and further action needs to be taken to stop the behaviour, we will use a range of tools, both legal and voluntary to stop the behaviour.

Eviction remains the last resort.



Please see our Service Standard or our 'Tenant's Guide to' leaflet for more information.

Vulnerable people

We recognise that tackling ASB is not just about enforcement action and that we must work effectively in partnership with support services that are available to deal with such issues. Many of the perpetrators of nuisance and ASB are vulnerable and need help and support from Ashfield Homes or other agencies such as Social Services, Health Professionals, to help them deal with their problems. We will work with partners to put people in touch with agencies who can help them to stop problem behaviour.

Evidence

It is important to understand that first hand-evidence, where the person who directly witnessed ASB provides a statement on what has happened and attends court is most effective, as it allows a Judge to understand exactly what effect the ASB has had on other members of the community. Ashfield Homes will provide support to all witnesses and their families.

Reporting ASB

Housing Management Advisor on
Tel- 01623 608999 or Anti Social Behaviour
Hotline on Freephone Tel- 0800 952 0193