



# **Antisocial Behaviour**

# **Policy Document**

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## **Scope and purpose of this Policy document**

This document supports Cambridge City Council's [Our vision](#) statement and is intended to fulfil the requirements of the [Housing Act 1996](#) with regards to the publication of the policies and procedures of a local housing authority in relation to antisocial behaviour (ASB). It tells you what ASB is and sets out the guiding principles for those officers in the Council who deal with ASB. It says what we want our services to achieve for people experiencing ASB and sets out the principles on the kind of service level and quality we aim to provide. This document does not say how we will deal with ASB on a day-to-day basis: this is covered in our Procedures document.

## **Our responsibilities**

Cambridge City Council has a wide range of responsibilities, which arise from three distinct roles, in dealing with ASB:

### **1. Our role as a social landlord**

As a landlord, we have a duty, under the [Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003](#) to respond to ASB affecting the properties we manage. Our landlord duties and powers are different from, and usually act in addition to, the duties and powers we have, to deal with ASB in the wider community. In this document (and the Procedures document) we will make it clear when a policy or a power applies only to Council tenancies. We now have a range of additional powers to take action against those causing ASB under the [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#).

### **2. Our role as a statutory member of the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership**

Under the [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#), we must work with the police and other agencies to reduce crime and disorder in Cambridge. In this role we play a key part in dealing with ASB of all kinds and also undertake project and preventative work as part of the [Cambridge Community Safety Partnership](#).

### **3. Our role in protecting the environment**

The Council has a range of responsibilities to deal with environmental ASB: examples include noise, graffiti, litter, fly tipping and abandoned cars. These responsibilities arise from a number of Acts and local byelaws, but in particular from the [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#).

Whilst these three are distinct roles, there are very strong links between them, and close working arrangements have been developed and continue between the teams that deliver the various services. However, the policies described in this document mainly concern our landlord and Community Safety Partnership roles and so tend to say more about the work of our housing section (City Homes) and our Community Safety Team. Environmental ASB is tackled by several different teams within the Council, each of which works to its own set of policies and procedures.

## **What is antisocial behaviour?**

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) is defined, under the [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#), as “*conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person*”: this is the generally accepted term.

ASB is further defined, under this Act, as follows:

- For the purposes of an application to the courts by a housing provider, local authority or the police for a civil injunction: “*conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person’s occupation of residential premises*”;
- For the purposes of the housing management functions of a housing provider or local authority: “*conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person*”
- For the purposes of ASB case reviews (the [Community trigger](#)): “*behaviour causing harassment, alarm or distress to members or any member of the public*”.

## **The Council’s principles**

Our policy is based upon five principles:

### **1. No one should have to experience antisocial behaviour**

- We will make people aware what antisocial behaviour (ASB) is;
- We will publicise and promote the various services we provide to combat ASB;
- We will encourage people to report ASB and make it possible for them to do this using a range of reporting methods;
- We will seek to respond to each report of ASB as quickly as possible and, in any case, within service standards; and

- We will support victims of ASB to the extent that the seriousness of the matter requires.

## **2. Reports of antisocial behaviour will be treated seriously and dealt with professionally**

- We will assess (and periodically reassess) the seriousness of antisocial behaviour (ASB) reported to us, and act according to our service standards;
- We will treat all reports as confidential, sharing information only with other organisations that can help with the problem (for example, the police and health care professionals) and observing data protection laws and information sharing agreements;
- We will ensure that any criminal ASB reported to us is quickly passed on to the correct agency (the police);
- We will register each report of ASB we receive and give it a unique reference number;
- We will appoint a named officer to lead on and investigate the incident, where appropriate;
- We will explain our reasons, should we choose to take no further action on a report of ASB, and advise on self-help or other alternative courses of action whenever it is possible and appropriate to do this;
- We will continue to treat all reports as live until, in the opinion of the lead officer and the lead officer's manager, they can be closed, and the complainant notified;
- We will respond promptly to [complaints about our service](#) and advise anyone not satisfied with the way in which their report was handled as to how to make a formal complaint; and
- We will provide a mechanism for victims of antisocial behaviour (ASB) to ask for a review of their case where they feel that either no action or inadequate action has taken place to tackle the reported problem (the [Community trigger](#)).

## **3. Antisocial behaviour will be dealt with firmly, fairly and proportionately**

- We will deal with the most serious reports of antisocial behaviour (ASB) as a matter of urgency, especially where vulnerable people are involved, either as the complainant or the perpetrator;
- We will have due regard to the [public sector Equality Duty](#); and

- We will use all available and appropriate powers to address and resolve ASB.

#### **4. Working with other agencies to deliver an effective, value for money service across the community**

- We will play a full part as a key member of the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership;
- We will participate in permanent or ad-hoc multi-agency groups dealing with specific antisocial behaviour (ASB) issues (for example, problems involving street-based ASB); and
- We will work with agencies, such as housing associations, private landlords, letting agents and businesses, providing professional advice and support as required so that these agencies can act confidently to prevent or tackle ASB making use of their own resources.

#### **5. Providing a high-quality service that meets people's identified needs**

- ensure that staff dealing with antisocial behaviour (ASB) are qualified and trained, and understand, and follow, agreed policies and procedures;
- ensure that all reported incidents of ASB, triaged and actioned by the Community Safety Team, are dealt with within service standards;
- seek to ensure that all our activities are prioritised and undertaken regarding clear evidence of need, sound consideration of how effective the work undertaken is likely to be, and a clear understanding of the outcomes sought; and
- review this Policy document and the Procedures document at least once every two years.

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