

# Antisocial Behaviour

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Natalie Schofield  
your new  
Anti-Social  
Behaviour Officer



As part of our commitment to you, our tenants, and following feedback we have received from you, we have decided to implement a newsletter detailing the tools and powers the Association has used to tackle anti-social behaviour in our areas.

Following the Housing Services Team's recent re-structure I have been recruited into the brand new post of Estuary's first Anti-social Behaviour Officer. My role is to be contributing to Estuary's compliance with good practice and legislation, I will also monitor and co-ordinate the Housing Officers' case work, giving advice and support to staff and residents where necessary. I must stress that your first point of contact for any report of anti-social behaviour will still be your Housing Officer.

## Safer Neighbourhood



### What is anti-social behaviour?

The law says that anti-social behaviour is "any behaviour that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress" It can be anything from low level persistent nuisance to serious to

violent behaviour. It includes all behaviour that harms residents' quality of life in and around their home. Some examples include neighbour nuisance, vandalism, graffiti, verbal abuse, drug related crime and much more.

### What is Estuary's Approach to Anti-Social Behaviour?

We aim to promote a safe and secure environment for people to live in and to prevent anti-social behaviour from happening. We set out clear requirements of our residents in our tenancy agreements and will take enforcement action where appropriate. We work in partnership with the Police and other partners to prevent and deal with anti-social behaviour. To demonstrate our commitment to this Estuary has recently signed up to RESPECT.



The Respect Standard for Housing Management forms part of a drive for local agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour and to improve the quality of life for Residents. This is aimed at social landlords and is a voluntary Standard which the Government wants as many landlords as possible to sign up to.



## Enforcement Action

Reporting of anti-social behaviour is on the increase as communities and individuals are becoming less tolerant of this.

Once reported, tenants want their landlord to act quickly to stop the anti-social behaviour, and to prevent any future repetition. This can be a lengthy process and evidence from the person affected is essential to every case.

Anti-social behaviour cannot be tackled by individual agencies alone. Effective strategies need to be supported by partnerships including local authorities, police, social services and many more. It is critically important for these agencies to share information and resources which can be a time consuming process.

Not all anti-social behaviour cases require enforcement action but there are occasions when it becomes the only option. When legal action is required the success of this depends entirely on whether the Association can place sufficient evidence in front of the Court. Evidence can be in many forms and is likely to include; witness statements, diary sheets, file records, warning letters, conviction reports, CCTV footage etc. Once all evidence has been obtained an application can be made to the Court.

Our experience with anti-social behaviour cases means we are aware that just to get a case before the court can take up to 6 weeks. The case can sometimes be adjourned by the Court to allow more time for the defence, so the whole process can take up to three months to finalise. If you are a witness in an anti-social behaviour case you will be given advice and support regarding the court process.

## Our service standards for dealing with anti-social behaviour

### We will;

- Investigate all complaints of anti-social behaviour
- Use a range of prevention measures to reduce anti-social behaviour
- We will provide an initial response to your report within 24 hours acknowledging its receipt and informing you of who will be dealing with your case.
- Where there are emergency repairs or discriminatory graffiti we will aim to remove this within 24 hours.
- Support and work with you in trying to resolve the problem
- Offer clear advice and support when you report an incident
- Agree an action plan with you within 2 weeks of you reporting an incident and review this regularly
- Use a range of legal and non-legal remedies to resolve anti-social behaviour, taking an approach that is appropriate to the case.
- If we feel your case should be closed, we will discuss this with you and give you an opportunity to appeal

### Note: If we discover that complaints are unfounded and Anti-Social Behaviour Phone Line



**0800 731 6976**

Out of office hours please call and leave a message on our dedicated anti-social behaviour line. You will need to leave your contact details and a brief description of the problem. A member of staff will return your call on the next working day.

## Future Newsletters

You will be receiving a quarterly newsletter from your Housing Officers to keep you up to date on our work. I will use a section of this to relay to you any anti-social behaviour updates specific to your area. If you would like to contact me on any of these issues, please do not hesitate to do so on 01702 445264 or e-mail [natalie.schofield@estuary.co.uk](mailto:natalie.schofield@estuary.co.uk)