



Gravesend Churches Housing Association

Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

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Responsible Officer:	Felicity Dunmall, Housing Services Manager
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Signed off by:	Name: Steve Harriott Date: 20 th May 2020

GCHA will not tolerate any form of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and will take appropriate action to remedy a situation where ASB is causing nuisance. This is a summary statement of our policy and procedure.

1. Definition

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 defines ASB as: -

- conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person;
- conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises; or
- conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

2. Expected Standards of Behaviour

- We expect our residents to show consideration to their neighbours and their community, not to commit, or allow their family or visitors to commit acts of ASB or criminality.
- We will encourage residents to report incidents of ASB, harassment, criminality and domestic abuse to the police.
- Residents are encouraged to resolve minor personal disputes with their neighbours in a reasonable manner.
- Tolerance must be shown where there is a conflict of lifestyle choices where it does not breach tenancy conditions and is not ASB, or nuisance.

3. Examples of ASB

The types of behaviour that we consider anti-social include:

- Physical violence
- Domestic abuse
- Hate related incidents
- Drugs, substance misuse or drug dealing
- Alcohol-related nuisance
- Vandalism and damage to property
- Prostitution
- Illegal and immoral use of premises
- Other criminal behaviour
- Misuse of communal areas or public spaces
- Noise (e.g. persistent loud music)
- Pets and animal nuisance
- Dumped rubbish/fly tipping and unsanitary conditions
- Nuisance vehicles & car repairs

4. Examples of what is not ASB

- Babies crying
- Children playing
- Cooking odours
- Normal behaviour occurring at unusual times because of different working patterns, provided attempts are made to keep the disturbances to a minimum
- One off parties, e.g. BBQ where there is no evidence the problem will re-occur
- Clash of lifestyles including cultural differences

5. What to do if you think you are experiencing anti-social behaviour

We want our homes and communities to be safe places to live where people show respect and behave in a way that is acceptable showing consideration.

If you are concerned or worried by a neighbour's behaviour try talking to them first but only if you feel comfortable and happy to do so. Most people will modify their behaviour and talking to each other often breaks down barriers. If after talking to your neighbour, the behaviour still continues and/or gets worse and you don't feel safe you can report this to GCHA.

How to report ASB:

You can report all incidents of ASB to any of our staff either:

- by telephone
- in writing
- in person
- by emailing general@gcha.org.uk
- GCHA website

6. When you report Anti-Social Behaviour

We will contact you to discuss the matter in further detail in line with the timescales below, if the matter is to be investigated a formal interview will be conducted and an action plan agreed, this will include agreed actions, timelines and any support needs including signposting to external agencies where necessary. You will be sent a copy of this for your records.

We will update you on our progress as agreed in your personal action plan.

If no further action is required, we will write and advise you of this and close the case.

The timescales to contact are in accordance with the severity of the ASB:

Category A – high priority

Respond within 1 working day

- hate related incidents based on protected characteristics
- domestic abuse
- physical violence
- prostitution/sexual acts
- criminal behaviour/crime

Category B – medium priority:

Respond within 5 working days

- noise
- verbal abuse
- vandalism and damage to property
- drugs/substance misuse/drug dealing
- alcohol related
- misuse of communal areas/public space/loitering

Category C – lower priority:

Respond within 10 working days

- nuisance from vehicles
- litter/rubbish/fly tipping
- garden nuisance
- pets and animal nuisance

We aim to deal quickly and effectively with all cases to resolve them at the earliest opportunity.

We will record anonymous reports, but only act if the anti-social behaviour can be substantiated either by staff or where additional evidence can be gained.

Counter allegations: all parties in an anti-social behaviour case will be treated fairly and listened to on an equal basis and action will be taken based on the evidence available.

7. Dealing with anti-social behaviour

- Our response to proven allegations will be proportionate and appropriate. We believe that in many incidences, ASB can be stopped when challenged early enough.
- Wherever possible we will use non-legal intervention measures.
- Except in serious cases, our initial intervention will aim to stop the problem behaviour, preventing it from re-occurring achieving effective and long-lasting solutions.
- Where either the case is serious and/or criminal, or other intervention has failed to stop or prevent persistence ASB, we may pursue legal action after taking legal advice e.g. injunctions, exclusion orders.
- Perpetrators can ultimately be evicted for their behaviour. Where the behaviour is a serious risk to others we will seek eviction.
- We aim to provide a balanced approach between protecting the quiet enjoyment of the community and helping individuals to sustain their tenancies by addressing ASB.
- Criminal cases should be referred to the police to deal with.

8. Monitoring Anti-Social Behaviour

We will record and monitor the extent and type of ASB in order to:

- establish the scale and type of the problem
- develop effective strategies
- target resources
- develop effective performance measures
- gather intelligence that supports decisions

9. Vulnerable tenants, witnesses or perpetrators

In all cases we will consider the support needs and vulnerability of the person reporting the incident, any witnesses and the person responsible for the behaviour when agreeing a course of action.

10. Working with other agencies

We will work with other agencies including local authorities, police, community safety unit, residents' groups and voluntary agencies on individual cases as required to ensure we maintain an effective and proactive role in local crime and disorder strategies.

11. Community Triggers

The Community Trigger is a victim led initiated process which requires GCHA, local authorities, the police and local health teams to jointly deal with anti-social behaviour.

Anyone can use the Community Trigger if their concern is about anti-social behaviour or a hate crime/incident and meets the criteria below:

- A resident has reported three separate incidents relating to the same problem in the past six months to GCHA, the local authority, police or other relevant agency;
- or
- One incident or crime motivated by hate (due to race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity) has been reported by an individual in the last six months and no action has been taken;
- or
- At least five people from different households have made reports about the same problem in the past six months to GCHA, local authority, police or other relevant agency and no action has been taken.

12. Confidentiality & GDPR

All details relating to you will remain confidential if requested. In all cases discretion will be used to ensure we do not release any information to the alleged perpetrator that may put you in any danger or any witness at risk.

APPROVED POLICY