

Grosvenor Hart Homes: Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

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Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out how Grosvenor Hart Homes (GHH) will prevent and tackle Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the neighbourhoods where we own homes. Our approach enables colleagues to work in partnership with customers, communities and key agencies, in order to promote safe and good quality neighbourhoods and enable tenants to live comfortably in their homes.

GHH aims to deliver best in sector services and recognise this will only be achieved by working closely with tenants and ensuring their feedback shapes all aspects of what we do. As a Registered Provider of Social Housing, we will consult our tenants on this policy and will revise our approach as required.

We always welcome feedback on any of our policies, procedures or services at any time. If you have any comments, compliments or complaints about this policy, please let us know. Feedback may be made in one of the following ways:

- by telephone
- in person at any of our offices
- via our websites [Hart Homes \(grosvenor.com\)](http://Hart Homes (grosvenor.com))
- in writing to any of our offices
- by email to tenant.support@grosvenorhart.com

GHH has adopted the legal definition of ASB as being:

- 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
- Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Through the Neighbourhood and Community Standard the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) expects GHH to work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where we own homes. This policy sets how we meet the standard.

GHH aims to prevent and address ASB by ensuring:

- a. that tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB
- b. strong leadership, commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects a shared understanding of responsibilities with other local agencies
- c. a strong focus exists on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families
- d. prompt, appropriate and decisive action is taken to deal with ASB before it escalates, which focuses on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available
- e. all tenants and residents can easily report ASB, are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation and are appropriately signposted where it does not
- f. provision of support to victims and witnesses

What is ASB?

We recognise that if left unchallenged anti-social behaviour can have a very significant effect on the quality of life of individuals and groups within our communities and can impact on the welfare of communities as a whole. Accordingly, we aim to tackle what are often diverse and complex issues around anti-social behaviour using a range of tools including prevention, support and enforcement with the objective of delivering a proportionate and flexible response to the challenges that ASB presents.

We take ASB to be deliberate and intentional acts that may result in nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm or distress to others. We include in our definition the failure to address inconsiderate behaviour of this nature.

We expect our tenants not to commit, or allow their family, other household members, visitors or pets to commit acts of ASB towards any person reasonably entitled to be in the vicinity of any of our properties, including other tenants, GHH staff and contractors.

We recognise that GHH tenant's will come from a variety of backgrounds, and some will have previous experiences which may at times impact on their ability to comply with the conditions of their tenancy and manifest as antisocial behaviour. In line with our values, we will always in the first instance seek to understand how we can support perpetrators of ASB in using a trauma informed approach to reduce this behaviour whilst balancing the impact such behaviour has on the wider community.

In relation to our tenants, our properties, and the neighbourhoods where we have a presence, GHH will be proactive in its approach to preventing ASB and intervening where it does occur. We will be accountable for the actions taken to prevent and tackle ASB.

We will encourage tolerance of the differences that exist between individuals in our communities. In general, we do not consider cooking smells, the noise of children playing, minor disputes within and between households, one off parties, sounds from moving around the home and communal areas and other features of everyday life to be ASB. However, we can take account of time, frequency and impact of such matters and may investigate at our discretion.

This policy will be made available on our website, and a procedure will be developed to support its implementation.

This statement of policy and its delivery are designed to be compatible with statutory commitments:

- i. Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- ii. Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- iii. General Data Protection Regulations May 2018
- iv. Equality Act 2010
- v. Freedom of Information Act 2000
- vi. Homelessness Act 2002
- vii. Housing Act 1988
- viii. Housing Act 1996
- ix. Human Rights Act 1998
- x. Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- xi. Race Relations Acts
- xii. Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Examples of other relevant policies or approaches are:

- i. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

- ii. Allocations Policies
- iii. Complaints Policy
- iv. Safeguarding Policies for Adults and Children.

Policy aims and objectives

Our approach to ASB is an important priority for GHH. In order to meet this priority, it is important that GHH maximises its partnership approach working with agencies such as the police, local fire & rescue services and all local authority community safety partnerships and support agencies. In addition, GHH will look to develop best practice in service delivery and seek to influence the national regulatory agenda for tackling crime, nuisance and ASB.

We aim to deliver positive outcomes from our work to prevent and tackle ASB, including ensuring that living environments are safe and comfortable for tenants living in GHH homes.

In adopting and implementing this policy we have the following objectives:

- Minimise the occurrence of ASB
- Tenants feel supported when they experience ASB
- Appropriate action against perpetrators of ASB is taken and recorded
- Reported ASB is resolved without the need for legal action
- Strong customer satisfaction scores in relation to ASB
- Adherence to all relevant legislation and regulatory standards.

To ensure these aims are met, we will:

- Be clear with our tenants about our approaches to ASB and neighbourhood issues
- Agree actions with complainants and victims where possible
- Communicate that the expression of different lifestyles is not necessarily ASB
- Recognise that effective partnership working is fundamental to addressing ASB
- Provide direct support for perpetrators of ASB where appropriate only resorting to enforcement where necessary
- Use powers set out in legislation appropriately and proportionately
- Consider formal legal action, including possession, only as a last resort in the most serious cases or when other measures have failed
- Ensure colleagues are aware of this policy and trained to deal effectively with ASB
- Use data and feedback to monitor performance, trends, effects of our work, and to identify opportunities to improve our approaches.

Positive action

We look to address anti-social behaviour as early as possible because this may prevent situations from escalating and may stop the anti-social behaviour. However, in some cases, for example where anti-social behaviour is serious or where anti-social behaviour continues notwithstanding our efforts to tackle it and support all involved, it may be appropriate to use robust and swift enforcement action to meet our objectives of protecting communities and preventing anti-social behaviour. The tools and powers introduced by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (Including, but not limited to, civil injunctions, criminal behaviour orders, dispersal powers, community protection notices, public spaces protection orders, closure powers and absolute orders for possession) will form part of the operational delivery of this policy by ourselves and/or in conjunction with our partners, along with existing powers to recover possession of property.

Policy detail

Communication and tenant involvement

We will be clear about landlord, tenant and partner responsibilities so that tenants understand the different approaches we can take in relation to ASB and neighbourhood issues. Our parameters for opening and closing cases will be clearly stated.

We will maintain regular and ongoing communication with tenants who report ASB and have a case opened; including provision of a named contact and agreed contact schedule. This ensures that GHH and the tenant both have the most up to date information.

Where we do not consider a matter to be ASB or are not able to take a case forward we will give a clear explanation of our decisions and signpost to external agencies where appropriate.

We will engage with tenants to understand their views and expectations around ASB, and to shape how we manage reports of ASB and cases opened.

Prevention

Prevention is an integral part of our approach to anti-social behaviour. We utilise a range of initiatives in appropriate cases which are designed to prevent anti-social behaviour from occurring using a mix of education, engagement, communication and support. The initiatives we use or can access in appropriate cases include:

- Provide an intensive support service to all GHH tenants
- Regular estate inspections which enable us to identify any 'hotspot' issues / areas and 'clean up' campaigns on our estates
- Diversionary activities which we arrange with partners
- Use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and mediation service
- Designing out crime ('secure by design' principles) and the use of CCTV and 'alley gating' in appropriate areas in conjunction with the local authority
- Use of our allocations policy to seek to mitigate the risk of new tenants behaving in a criminal or anti-social manner
- Use of starter tenancies and the Respect and Social Responsibility Sign-Up Statement/Good Neighbour Agreement to emphasise the importance of behaviour and community safety
- Multi-agency partnerships
- Education and raising awareness (this includes publicising cases where anti-social behaviour and criminal activity have been identified and publicising campaigns to tackle criminal and anti-social behaviour)
- Assessment of potential support needs of tenants at tenancy signup
- Provision of support, or referral to support services, where potential need is identified
- Encouraging tolerance of lifestyle differences and respect for others' enjoyment of their home
- Encouraging prompt reporting of concerns about problematic behaviour
- Prompt responses to reports of ASB
- Use of action plans and acceptable behaviour agreements with perpetrators

Intervention

GHH will take prompt, appropriate and decisive action to deal with ASB before it escalates. We will investigate cases to understand the issue and gather evidence where appropriate.

Our actions will focus on resolving the problem quickly and effectively, and as such we will seek to avoid use of formal action/use of powers. However, sometimes cases will not be effectively resolved this way or may escalate. We will use formal powers in such circumstances, again with a view to resolution.

We will act in line with key legislation related to ASB, and when intervening in ASB we will have regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available. Examples of non-legal and legal approaches are mediation, acceptable behaviour agreements, civil injunction, community protection notice, and possession orders.

In general, we will not resolve ASB by moving complainants or alleged perpetrators who are tenants, we will deal with the problem and aim to sustain tenancies.

Evicting a GHH tenant following enforcement action relating to ASB will be a last resort. If we use absolute grounds to seek possession where the legal tests are met, the tenant will have the right to request a review of our decision to seek possession.

We will provide tailored support, with the aim of enabling tenants to enjoy their home.

Each case will have an action plan which sets out clearly the steps being taken to resolve the ASB and the intended outcome or purpose of each step.

We will take account of underlying causes and vulnerabilities when dealing with tenants accused of perpetrating ASB, to promote the best changes of resolution and to ensure that our actions are proportionate in line with the Equality Act.

Reporting ASB

GHH will ensure that all tenants can easily report ASB and will provide processes for ASB to be reported online.

ASB can also be reported by phone, email or letter or any other method stated in our customer service policy; with emergency out of hours incidents to be reported online.

Contact details for all methods of reporting ASB will be provided to all customers at tenancy sign up and displayed clearly online.

We want people to feel confident in coming forward with information. Where complainants wish to remain anonymous, we will investigate the complaint, but our ability to take effective action may be limited.

Hate Crime

We take harassment / hate crime in any form against any member of our community extremely seriously. Such conduct can have a very traumatic effect on the victim and a divisive effect on our communities. Racial and other harassment and hate crime may include, but is not limited to, violence, intimidation and/or abuse towards a person or group of people (or damage to their property) because of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age or religion. For recording purposes, we define hate crime as behaviour committed against a person or property which is motivated by

hostility towards someone based on their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age or religion.

We will look to involve our partners (e.g., local Police services) in these sorts of cases wherever appropriate.

We are committed to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Promoting good relations between people of different backgrounds
- Maximising the reporting of incidents that are 'hate' motivated
- Supporting complainants and their families
- Taking action against perpetrators
- Monitoring the number of racial harassment and other hate crime incidents by type and geographical area
- Monitoring the actions taken in such cases by ourselves and partners and satisfaction levels during and following case completions
- Reporting key monitoring data to Board on a regular basis to give assurance that we are meeting our aims and objectives

Domestic Abuse

We want to achieve a community that does not tolerate domestic abuse and that affords effective support to all of its victims (whether adults or children) whilst at the same time holding perpetrators to account. Domestic abuse may fall within the definition of anti-social behaviour. Each case must be considered on its facts.

We are mindful of the need to ensure that survivors are supported in accessing remedies specifically designed to address domestic abuse (for example non-molestation orders) whilst other enforcement tools may be used by us and/or other agencies in appropriate cases (e.g., to provide protection to the victim and/or prevent impact on the wider community).

Partnership working

We will maintain good working relationships with support services that can provide support to complainants and perpetrators; and will seek to work in a coordinated manner to support positive outcomes for tenants and neighbourhoods.

We will work in partnership with other agencies around intervention, in particular around use of legal powers where agencies other than GHH must take the lead.

GHH will participate fully and constructively if requested by relevant bodies to attend an ASB Case Review, with a view to contributing to resolution of persistent ASB issues.

Support to victims, witnesses and perpetrators

Where GHH is responsible for dealing with an ASB issue, we will make sure that tenants are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation.

If the matter sits outside GHH's responsibilities, we will signpost tenants to other avenues to assist with the issue.

We will offer support to tenants experiencing ASB to assist their wellbeing. We will also offer support to those perpetrating ASB to try to resolve the behaviour and sustain their tenancy.

Support to complainants may include:

- Regular contact, explanation of the scope of our interventions, clear action planning and accountability for its completion
- Prompt resolution of physical damage to property
- Additional security fitted to property (target hardening)
- Referral to specialist agencies that can provide support and assistance
- Consideration of rehousing options and assistance to progress these if suitable and required
- Accompanying to court and ensuring appropriate arrangements are made to facilitate attendance
- Explanations of the outcome of any court process and next steps
- Where appropriated GHH will consider Risk assessing and using physical measures in appropriate cases to reassure complainants or protect witnesses (e.g., use of personal alarms or fireproof bags for letterboxes etc) or provision noise monitoring equipment

Support to perpetrators may include:

- Ongoing support and clear explanations of expectations and processes underway
- If necessary, a referral to specialist support e.g., substance misuse, mental health, Referral to statutory agencies e.g., social services

We will liaise with external agencies over progress of the case to support joined up approaches, especially where decisions and steps taken will impact on their client and the nature of support required.

Professional witnesses and covert surveillance

In appropriate cases we will consider the use of professional witnesses and/or covert surveillance to gather or support evidence of anti-social behaviour. Any such consideration will be based on the facts of the particular case.

Confidentiality, Data Protection and Information Exchange

Whilst we respect privacy and confidentiality and are mindful of our legal obligations under the Data Protection Act 1988, (GDPR from May 2018), tackling anti-social behaviour requires robust information exchange between statutory and non-statutory agencies. We will agree specific protocols for information sharing with LA and Police)

We will share information with other agencies where it is lawful to do to help us to detect and prevent anti-social behaviour and to protect our communities. The type of information which might be shared includes, but is not limited to:

- The nature and location of incidents of anti-social behaviour
- Personal information as to complainants and witnesses
- Details of relevant visits to the property by agencies including the police
- Convictions, cautions, reprimands, bail conditions, progress of criminal cases

Complainants may seek to provide information confidentially. This may be for a variety of reasons, for example because they are fearful of retaliation by the perpetrator if they are identified. Our policy is to seek permission before disclosing the identity of complainants and witnesses to perpetrators, their legal representatives, or other interested parties. Where anonymous evidence may by virtue of its content necessarily reveal the identity of the maker of the statement, we will discuss this with the maker of the

statement. Notwithstanding any request for anonymity information relating to complainants and perpetrators may however have to be shared with other agencies for lawful purposes such as the purpose of preventing crime.

Rights and responsibilities

Landlord and tenants’ responsibilities relating to ASB are set out at Appendix 1.

We will confirm these with new tenants at tenancy sign up and publish them on our website. We will take other periodic opportunities to restate tenants’ rights and responsibilities e.g., in newsletters, at community events etc.

Where a tenant reports ASB or raises concerns with us, we will confirm rights and responsibilities with them.

Service standards

We will take prompt action to address customer concerns relating to ASB in accordance with our service standards.

ASB actions will be categorised and delivered within stated timescales as follows:

Category	Definition	Timescale
Category 1	Serious issues of ASB, where there is a serious risk or evidence of harm to individuals including: Abusive or threatening behaviour Assault Domestic abuse Hate crime Drug activity involving enforcement action e.g., a closure order Cuckooing (taking over someone’s home to facilitate crime or exploitation)	Case opened within 1 working day of report Action plan in place within 1 week of case opening Fortnightly contact established with tenant within 28 days
Category 2	Other issues of ASB that cause irritation, upset, and impede enjoyment of property and neighbourhood stability including: Noise nuisance Neighbour disputes Alcohol related disturbance Animal nuisance Criminal Damage Drug use/dealing	Case opened within 3 working days of report Action plan in place within 2 weeks of case opening Fortnightly contact established with tenant within 28 days

We will keep accurate records on all reports of ASB and cases opened.

Customer feedback and complaints

Customer complaints about ASB services will be handled in line with our complaints policy.

Complaints relating to ASB will be monitored and used, individually and in aggregate, to refine and improve our services and performance.

Monitoring & compliance

We will monitor the delivery of our anti-social behaviour service and report to operational staff, senior leadership team, the board, and our customers. Key performance indicators will be used to monitor and report performance, as well as complaints & complements received. This allows us to be accountable for our service delivery, identify any trends which require intervention, and focus on delivery of the objectives stated above.

We will report against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures prescribed by the Regulator of Social Housing, as well as indicators developed for internal use by staff in conjunction with tenants.

Performance indicators that will be reported to board and customers are detailed at Appendix 1. This is not an exhaustive list.

Review schedule

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently as a result of an incident occurring, feedback obtained, internal/external audits and change in legislation/regulatory requirements. This process ensures the policy's continuing suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness.

The Housing Director has responsibility for this policy, and ultimate responsibility for performance and compliance sits with the board.

Current version	Date approved	Date for review	Document owner
1.1	27.06.23	27.06.25	Karl Dean
1.2	04.07.24	29.07.27	Karl Dean

Appendix 1 – Landlord and tenant responsibilities

GHH's ASB responsibilities are to:

- To take supportive approach to all perpetrators of ASB whilst they continue to engage with GHH
- Show strong leadership, commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects a shared understanding of responsibilities with other local agencies
- Ensure that tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB
- Place a strong focus on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families
- Take prompt, appropriate and decisive action to deal with ASB before it escalates
- Work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where we own homes
- Ensure all tenants and other tenants can easily report ASB
- Focus on resolving ASB having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available
- Ensure tenants are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the GHH and are appropriately signposted where it does not
- Provide support to victims and witnesses
- Participate constructively in an ASB Case Review when a person asks the relevant local bodies for one and the local threshold is met.

Tenants are responsible for:

- Ensuring their behaviour does not cause, and is not likely to cause, nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm or distress to others
- Ensuring the behaviour of their household members, family, friends and visitors does not cause, and is not likely to cause, nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm or distress to others
- Showing respect and tolerance of other tenants' day to day living and lifestyle differences where these occur
- Addressing minor disagreements and problems themselves, showing respect to others
- Reporting incidents of ASB promptly

Appendix 2 - Performance monitoring

We will monitor and report on the following:

Management information

Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord
Number of cases opened for each 1,000 homes owned
Number of cases that involve hate incidents

Responses to reports of ASB - Number of ASB cases reported and dealt with within timescales as %

Resolution of cases - Number of ASB cases resolved and closed as a % total number of cases

All performance will be reported against target, with a year to date figure in each reporting cycle and a year end figure provided annually

Customer satisfaction

% of tenants who say they are satisfied with GHH's approach to handling anti-social behaviour

% of tenants who say it was easy to make a report of ASB - Number saying easy, total number of respondents, total number of reports