

Anti-Social Behaviour & Enforcement Policy

1. Introduction

Bolton at Home is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour and responding to tenancy breaches and has a specialist Neighbourhood Safety & Enforcement Service.

Bolton at Home is a core member of 'Be Safe' partnership and is committed to working in partnership with Bolton Council, the Police and other statutory agencies in a supportive and responsive partnership framework to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour.

2. Purpose

This policy document outlines how Bolton at Home intends to fulfil the requirements of section 218A of the Housing Act 1996 (as inserted by section 12 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003) with regard to the publication of the policies and procedures of a in relation to anti-social behaviour and tenancy enforcement.

3. Scope

This policy outlines what we mean by 'anti-social behaviour' (ASB) and tenancy breach setting out the guiding principles for officers who deal with ASB and tenancy enforcement. The policy 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 or tenancy enforcement on a day-to-day basis. This is covered in our procedures and guidance documents.

Definition of Anti-Social behaviour and tenancy breach

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is defined under section 2 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Bolton at Home will consider the following to be examples of anti-social behaviour and tenancy breaches (this is not an exhaustive list):-

- Noise nuisance (above and beyond what is reasonable household noise)
- Criminal activity in or in the locality of the tenanted property (e.g. drug dealing)
- Physical assault and violent behaviour
- Harassing and intimidating people
- Verbal abuse and aggressive behaviour
- Threats of violence
- Abandoned vehicles and other vehicle nuisance
- Damage or misuse of property creating risk e.g. meter tampering, hoarding
- Alterations to property without permission creating a risk.
- Property condition failing to meet the minimum standard
- Criminal damage and vandalism
- Access refusal to conduct a property inspection or to carry out essential works to ensure the safety of others

- Hate behaviour
- Domestic Abuse (refer to separate policy)
- Problems caused by pet/animals (fouling, uncontrolled behaviour or persistent barking)
- Untidy gardens and environmental hazards.
- Fly tipping or creating fire risks, blocking communal areas and fire exits
- Tenancy fraud including Right-to-Buy fraud.

Bolton at Home will **NOT** consider some types of behaviour as 'anti-social' – examples (not an exhaustive list) include - a dog barking intermittently, cooking smells, a one off party e.g. a birthday, children playing, a baby crying or people undertaking DIY at a reasonable time.

4. Policy

Our policy is based upon a 4 'key' principles:

No one should have to put up with anti-social behaviour, so we will:

- make people aware what anti-social behaviour is;
- publicise and promote our various services to combat ASB
- encourage people to report ASB and provide a range of reporting channels;
- seek to respond to ASB reports as quickly as possible within our target times
- support victims of ASB to the extent that the seriousness of the case requires.

Anti-social behaviour reports will be treated seriously and dealt with professionally, so we will:

- treat all reports as confidential, sharing information only with other organisations that can help with the problem (for example, the police) and observing data protection laws, GDPR and information sharing agreements;
- assess (and periodically reassess) the seriousness of anti-social behaviour reported to us, and take action according to our target times and service standards;
- ensure that any criminal ASB reported to us is quickly passed on to the police;
- register each report of ASB we receive and give it a unique reference number;
- appoint a named officer to lead on each case;
- fully investigate the complaint;
- continue to treat any reports or case received as 'live' until, in the opinion of the lead officer and the lead officer's manager, the case can be closed;
- notify the reporter when a case is closed; respond promptly to complaints about our service and if not satisfied signpost the customer to the Customer Care Team and formal complaint process.

Anti-social behaviour will be dealt with firmly, fairly and with an evenly balanced response, so we will:

- deal with the most serious cases of ASB as a matter of urgency, especially where vulnerable people are involved, either as the reporter or the subject
- use all available and appropriate legal powers to address and resolve ASB and tenancy breach;
- use early intervention and prevention strategies if appropriate to do so
- We will work with partners under the Be Safe partnership (Police, Fire Service, Bolton Council, Safeguarding, Probation, Health) in Bolton in order to deliver an effective value for money service across the community.

We will provide a high quality service which meets people's identified needs, so we will:

- ensure that staff dealing with ASB and tenancy enforcement are qualified and trained, and understand, and follow, agreed policies and procedures;
- carry out customer satisfaction surveys
- review policy and procedures documents at least once every two years
- seek the views of service users and partner organisations on review
- seek to ensure that all our activities are prioritised and undertaken with regard to clear evidence of need, sound consideration of how effective the work undertaken is likely to be, and a clear understanding of the outcomes sought.

5. Hate Crime

Bolton at Home is committed to supporting customers who are suffering from hate crimes or hate incidents. Bolton at Home condemns all forms of hate crime and aims to help ensure customers can enjoy their homes free from victimisation and abuse.

There are six 'strands' of hate crime officially monitored in Greater Manchester that Bolton at Home also recognise - Race, Religion and belief, Disability, Sexual orientation, Gender identity and Alternative Sub-culture (lifestyle or dress code)

Bolton at Home will make sure any reported hate crime or hate incidents are sensitively investigated by the Neighbourhood Safety & Enforcement Service and victims are provided with appropriate support.

Bolton at Home will work in partnership to help promote community cohesion and good relations between people of different backgrounds and racial groups.

6. Equality analysis

An EA has already been completed for the ASB service and still applies. This EA is due to be reviewed by August 2018. As part of service delivery Neighbourhood Safety & Enforcement Service undertake Vulnerability and Risk Assessments using RAM (Risk Assessment Matrix). This is undertaken as key stages of the case to identify and assesses if any support needs, risks vulnerability and to ensure the appropriate action and case strategy is pursued.

7. Legislation and Bolton at Home Policies

- ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Housing Act 1885, 1988, 1996
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Children's Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010

The following Bolton at Home policies will also be considered alongside the ASB & Enforcement policy when assessing a case for legal enforcement action.

- Support & Sustainment Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

8. Responsibility

The Head of Neighbourhood Safety and Enforcement Service will ensure this policy is successful, with staff within the service having individual and collective responsibility to implement and adhere to this policy.

9. Confidentiality

Due to the nature of the service ALL information will be treated as confidential and highly sensitive. All case files contain personal information as well as highly sensitive information e.g. child protection issues, criminal and medical records or health and support reports. In addition case files will have witness statements and Police reports. As such all cases case files will be kept locked with access restricted and a case file sign out process in operation.

10. Consultation

This policy was shared and discussed with a customer group on 24th May 2018. The session provided an opportunity for customers to comment and feedback on each element within the policy. The session resulted in the policy being amended to provide more clarity on the 'Be Safe' partnership membership and joint approach to tackling criminal activity.

11. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored via a set of key performance indicators, internal and external case audits and quality checks as well as independently carried out Customer Satisfaction Surveys.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Date approved	2 July 2018
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