



Title of policy:	Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy
Version:	1.1
Purpose:	To set out a clearly defined policy for dealing with ASB.
Updated:	June 2024
Next review:	June 2025
By:	Housing Service Manager

1.0 Introduction

We recognise that left unchallenged, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) can have a significant impact on the lives of our customers and residents. We are committed to ensuring that tenants and residents can enjoy peace, quiet and security in and around their homes. North Star aims to promote a safe and secure environment by working in partnership with statutory agencies to prevent ASB.

By working in partnership, and by using collective resources, knowledge, skills, and enforcement powers, we are determined to ensure tenants and residents can enjoy safety, security, and quality of life both in their homes and in the wider neighbourhood.

We work across diverse communities and are committed to preventing and tackling ASB, ensuring we balance enforced action and intervention, with appropriate support for our most vulnerable customers. We actively promote the requirement to engage with other agencies to ensure the most appropriate prevention and resolution to ASB is embedded through our communities.

We will tackle ASB through a combined approach of prevention, enforcement, and support.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

The policy aims to:

- Ensure our customers are aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB, to help prevent and address concerns.



- Set out our commitment to collaborative working with other agencies where it is possible to do so, to resolve ASB and other community safety problems.
- Prioritising early intervention and promoting swift action to prevent issues from escalating.
- Ensure an appropriate balance between protecting our customers rights to live peacefully in their homes and communities, with helping customers to sustain their tenancies.
- Not tolerate any behaviour that is designed to intimidate, abuse, or threaten any North Star staff or anyone working on behalf of North Star. Where appropriate, we will take legal action.
- Ensure that information is treated confidentially and responsibly. However, we are clear that where an individual's safety is at risk, we are required to report our concerns to the relevant authorities.
- In operating this policy, we will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements including but not exclusive to the following:
 - Neighbourhoods and Community Standard as set out by the Regulator of Social Housing
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
 - Requirements of the Equalities Act 2010
 - Criminal Damage Act 1971
 - Crime and Disorder Act 1998, amended 2002

North Star works across several local authorities. This policy overarches our approach in dealing with ASB. Some operational activities and practices will be determined by local practice.

Related Policies:

- Vulnerability and Reasonable Adjustment Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Hate Crime Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Tenancy Fraud Policy
- Common Allocations Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Lone Working

3.0 What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

The term anti-social behaviour can mean different things to different people.

Anti-Social Behaviour is defined in law as “conduct that has caused, harassment, alarm or distress to a person”. Housing related nuisance or means behaviour that affects a social landlord’s ability to manage their housing.

With housing, ASB can include:

- Loud noise from neighbours
- Harassment such as verbal threats or abuse
- Vandalism, property damage or graffiti
- Fly tipping and dumping rubbish.
- Animal nuisance

Examples of ASB can include the following:

- Violence against people/property
- Verbal abuse and insults
- Intimidation/and or harassment
- Drug related ASB
- Alcohol related ASB
- Using a property for illegal or unlawful purposes
- Noise nuisance such as shouting, banging, loud music.
- Any type of hate behaviour that targets identified groups due to their perceived differences.
- Nuisance from pets such as constant/persistent dogs barking
- Domestic violence/abuse
- Dumping rubbish/untidy gardens

4.0 Preventative Measures /Early Intervention and Support

As part of the signing up procedure, housing staff will make customers aware of the Association’s ASB policy. Customers will be informed they are responsible for the behaviour of family members and visitors, and if any behaviours listed under this policy are proven, it will be deemed a breach of their tenancy and could result in legal action being taken.

North Star is committed to preventing incidents of ASB occurring and will use a range of preventative actions to achieve this. Where incidents have taken place, we recognise early intervention is key to avoid any escalation.

We will assess the information provided to us and will offer advice and support to help residents and communities to independently find a solution. We will use a combination of professional judgement and our ASB risk assessment framework to assess ASB demands.

We will seek a multi-agency approach when dealing with reported issues and will work with other agencies including police, social services, safeguarding, mental health professionals and education.

Through active participation in multi-agency forums in communities we operate in, we will maintain strategic influence over provisions for dealing with ASB and will look to provide a coordinated response with our partners on cases involving our customers. Some of the multi-agency forums we are members include Join Action Groups (JAGs) Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Multi-Agency Public Protection Conferences (MAPPAs) as well as a variety of problem-solving groups.

We will encourage where appropriate for customers/residents to access our mediation services to resolve issues before escalating.

Where specific vulnerabilities have been identified, we will use our Vulnerability and Reasonable Adjustment policy to provide an individual approach to those customers who can be either suffering or perpetrating ASB.

5.0 Enforcement

We recognise there will be occasions when mediation and working in partnership with others may not be successful. We will seek independent legal advice on these cases and where proportionate, enforcement action will be taken in partnership with statutory agencies.

North Star has a range of legal tools which we can take against perpetrators. These include:

- Injunctions (including undertakings, exclusions, and positive requirements)
- Possession proceedings
- Absolute possession powers
- Demotion of tenancies

We will work with our partners to invoke other legal remedies that we don't have as a social landlord including:

- Abatement Notices
- Closure Orders
- Criminal Behaviour Orders
- Dispersal Orders
- Parenting Orders
- Community Protection Warnings/notices

6.0 Support for Vulnerable Victims and Perpetrators

We will:

- Assess reports made to us in accordance with our Vulnerability and Reasonable Adjustment Policy so that we can identify vulnerabilities to inform our approach.
- Deal with all incidents reported to us under this policy by taking a victim-centred approach such that the necessary support and protection will be provided to the victim.
- Where we can and appropriate, resolve at first point of contact.
- Keep in regular contact with customers until their case is satisfactorily resolved or closed.
- Where necessary, improve security, helping to protect vulnerable customers in their homes such as window locks, fireproof letter boxes, additional locks etc.
- Consider management transfers on the grounds fairly and sympathetically where this is a resolution of the case.
- Where appropriate, our staff can give evidence on behalf of the customer without revealing the identity of the tenant. This is known as 'hearsay' evidence.

In addition to the above, we recognise some of our customers either victim or perpetrator many have complex needs and may require additional support.

This could include issues such as:

- Drug abuse
- Alcohol abuse
- Mental health issues or any form of disability
- Children at risk

Where a perpetrator of ASB has a vulnerability, we will try and ensure they have access to support to address any unacceptable behaviour. This will not be a barrier to taking any enforcement action if appropriate and proportionate.

7.0 Mediation

Mediation can be a cost-effective means of dealing with disputes between neighbours, which, if left unresolved may escalate into more serious ASB problems.

Mediation is a process whereby an independent third party seeks to help neighbours in dispute reach common ground and find a mutually agreeable solution.

We provide access to independent professional mediation services for customers where both parties voluntarily choose it. Mediation is not normally appropriate in cases involving violence although we can sometimes make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

8.0 Protecting Staff

In delivering service to the community, we expect that members of the public will treat our employees and those acting on our behalf with courtesy and respect.

We **will** not tolerate any behaviour that is designed to threaten, intimidate or abuse our employees and those acting on our behalf. Should we deem it necessary, we will seek advice and may take legal remedies.

9.0 Partnership Working

We recognise that dealing with ASB is not the sole responsibility of any single agency. We will work closely across all local authorities with the relevant agencies and will share information with appropriate partners within the framework in which we work. As a landlord we have a key role in creating safe and sustainable communities and can only achieve this in partnership to deliver a comprehensive approach to local problems and priorities.

We participate in various multi-agency partnerships to resolve issues within communities where we have properties through an early intervention and collaborative approach.

Some of the partnership that we actively participate in include but are not limited to:

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Joint Action Groups (JAG)
- Problem Solving Groups (PSG)
- ASB/Criminal Damage Strategic Groups
- Multi Agency Action Groups
- Hate Crime Forums
- Criminal Damage Forums
- Task and Finish Groups
- RESPECT (tenant led group specifically for ASB)
- MAPS
- Think Family (County Durham)

10.0 Confidentiality

When investigating or making referrals regarding ASB or harassment, we will always respect individuals right for confidentiality and will comply with all requirements of the UK Data Protection legislation.

This will include the following:

- Working under established information sharing protocols when exchanging personal data with external agencies and partners
- Only passing on information to third parties and external agencies with the explicit consent unless we have a good reason to believe they are at risk or in danger of immediate harm and emergency intervention is required.

11.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

We will record and monitor all reports of ASB by complaint category and area. We will also monitor the number of cases resolved by area and how they were resolved. This information will be used to enable us to build up profiles of area specific problems, volume of complaints, identify hotspots and target resources when such trends emerge. We will monitor the number of complaints, reviews, and appeals and use the information to improve our ASB service.

We will contact all complainants when the case has been closed to ask how satisfied they were with the service they received. We will use this information to improve the way we deliver services and ensure we are targeting our resources in the right areas.