



**CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

**Approved:**

**Review due:**

## Contents

1	Introduction
2	Policy statement
3	Scope of the Anti-social Behaviour Team
4	Definitions
5	Our approach
6	How to report
7	Responding to reports
8	Investigation
9	Support
10	Partnership working
11	Anti-social Behaviour case review
12	Vexatious complaints
13	Staff training, monitoring and review
14	Consultation
15	Equalities Implications
16	Complaints or disputes about this policy

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 We (Crawley Borough Council) believe that all residents of Crawley have the right to live in a safe, secure and peaceful environment. We are committed to promoting understanding, tolerance and respect within our communities.
- 1.2 This policy sets out how we will approach anti-social behaviour (ASB) in relation to residential properties within the Borough of Crawley. Our Anti-Social Behaviour Team provides a housing-related service to everyone who lives in Crawley, wherever they live, whether in owned, privately rented or social rented property.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with our statement of ASB procedures, which sets out how we deal with housing-related ASB on a day-to-day basis.

## **2. Policy Statement**

- 2.1. Crawley Borough Council's corporate values and behaviours emphasise making a difference to our residents and placing this intention at the heart of what we do. Effectively tackling anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance is essential to achieving this outcome. We have a team of dedicated anti-social behaviour caseworkers who investigate and respond to anti-social behaviour issues.
- 2.2. We embrace commitments in the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, and associated Consumer Standards, for tenants to have the right to feel safe in their homes without the stress, fear and tensions that anti-social behaviour and crime can cause.
- 2.3. In line with the expectation of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014, we place the victim at the heart of our approach and consider, in our response to complaints, the debilitating impact that persistent or repeat anti-social behaviour can have on victims, and the cumulative impact if that behaviour persists.

## **3. Scope of the Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) Team**

- 3.1. The ASB Team's purpose is to record and, where appropriate, investigate and address reports of anti-social behaviour. These may be from, or about, homeowners, and private tenants as well as council tenants and leaseholders. We can also deal with some community-related problems where these are affecting people in their homes.
- 3.2. We would not normally investigate anti-social behaviour problems where the landlord of the property where alleged ASB is taking place is another registered social landlord e.g. a housing association. Tenants of housing associations should contact their landlord directly to report anti-social behaviour.
- 3.3. There are some exceptions, which include significant and ongoing noise nuisance that might constitute a statutory noise nuisance, and where an ASB Case Review has been activated by a resident – see section 12.
- 3.4. Criminal offences, for example drug use, should be reported to the police, who have the primary responsibility for investigation. The Council may have some involvement if the perpetrator is a council tenant or leaseholder.

## 4. Definitions

### **Anti-Social Behaviour:**

- 4.1. The Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 defines anti-social behaviour as follows:
- (a) Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,
  - (b) Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or
  - (c) Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.
- 4.2. Section 8 (8) of the Housing Act 1996 218A defines anti-social behaviour as follows:
- (a) conduct that is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to some person (who need not be a particular identified person) and that directly or indirectly relates to or affects the landlord's housing management functions, or
  - (b) conduct that consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation owned or managed by the landlord for an unlawful purpose.
- 4.3. In practice, anti-social behaviour can cover a wide range of behaviours and activities that can have a detrimental effect on people's quality of life, and interfere with the peace, comfort, and enjoyment of their homes.
- The following are examples of anti-social behaviour that the ASB team can help with:
- Abuse, harassment, and intimidating behaviour
  - Hate crime – including racial abuse and harassment
  - Persistent noise nuisance (including but not limited to noise which may constitute a statutory noise nuisance)
  - Light nuisance e.g. security lights
  - Misuse of communal and common areas
  - Frequent bonfires and / or burning of prohibited materials
  - Animal related problems including dog barking and fouling
  - Drug use and drug dealing
  - Anti-social ball games
  - Intimidation from groups of people
  - Anti-social vehicle use
- 4.4. Anti-social behaviour does not extend to behaviour that may be perceived by others as unpleasant or inconsiderate but which in fact is largely due to a clash of lifestyles, is an infrequent occurrence, is unintended and can be remedied in other ways. The Council will record these types of complaints but will not usually investigate them.

Some examples of issues that we would not consider to be anti-social behaviour are as follows:

- Children playing in the street or in private gardens
  - Babies crying
  - General household living noise arising from normal day to day activities
  - DIY at reasonable times and frequencies
  - Occasional dog barking
  - Cooking odours
  - One-off house parties and isolated incidents of loud music (except where they constitute a statutory noise nuisance)
  - BBQ's
  - Highway parking issues and / or parking disputes / drive blocking
  - Civil disputes e.g. boundary issues between non-council owned properties
  - Social media disputes
- 4.5. With the exception of noise (where we have a statutory duty to investigate) if the above issues are reported and not considered to meet the threshold for anti-social behaviour we will not investigate, but where appropriate we may offer advice and self-help solutions, including suggestions to approach the mediation service.
- 4.6. For complaints of domestic, household noise, we would ask the complainant to keep a record and supply noise recording equipment to establish whether it constitutes statutory noise nuisance or should be investigated as antisocial behaviour, or when it can be addressed via support, advice and practical remedies to avoid noise transference; for example, accessing carpets, antivibration mats or other remedies in line with the good practice approach expected by the Housing Ombudsman.

## **6. Our approach**

- 5.1 We take an impartial approach and will provide tailored support and advice to all parties. We work collaboratively with other partners where appropriate; and take appropriate action against those who behave anti-socially.
- 6.1. In most instances, we encourage customers initially to speak to their neighbours about any nuisance issues as this usually proves effective in resolving problems amicably between both parties. A copy of our 'Dear Neighbour Card' can be downloaded from the Council website if a resident does not feel comfortable approaching their neighbour directly.
- 6.2. Where the Council provides assistance, we place emphasis on prevention and aim to intervene in neighbour disputes and community problems as early as possible to work towards a speedy and successful resolution that works for everyone.
- 6.3. Our response is tailored to each case and we use our discretion and expertise, alongside risk management approaches, to choose the most appropriate actions to help resolve the problem. Factors that will be considered when deciding an approach include the nature and frequency of the conduct or behaviour; the impact of the

conduct on others; the success and response to previous actions; and the proportionality and reasonableness of the proposed course of action.

6.4. In most cases, the first step will be to apply early intervention tools and techniques, which may include:

- Home visits to discuss the issues and agree desired outcomes and solutions
- Shuttle mediation -which involves the caseworker assisting the parties involved in a conflict to reach an agreement without them being present in the same room.
- Warning and advisory letters
- Acceptable behaviour contracts
- Working with other agencies to provide appropriate support and interventions to help address the causes of the anti-social behaviour

Those involved will be encouraged to engage and participate to stop incidents from escalating, to communicate with each other, and to respect differing viewpoints.

6.5. The Council will take enforcement action in cases where early intervention techniques have either not been successful, or not considered appropriate and the behaviour is continuing, escalating, or where complainants need protection to prevent further ASB.

6.6. The various legal remedies that may be used, include (but are not limited to) injunctions, possession action, closure orders, community protection notices, abatement notices, criminal behaviour orders and public space protection orders.

6.7. The council may also work with other Council departments and statutory bodies to implement other legal remedies.

## **7. How to report**

7.1. We offer a range of methods for reporting anti-social behaviour, to ensure that the process is simple and appropriate for the person reporting.

7.2. If able to, we encourage reporting online:

- <https://my.crawley.gov.uk/service/Tell Us About A Problem>
- The team can also be emailed at [asb@crawley.gov.uk](mailto:asb@crawley.gov.uk) or
- Contacted by telephone on 01293 438438
- Reports can also be made in person at the Town Hall, The Boulevard, Crawley.

7.3. We aim to reply within two working days. However, if criminal activity has taken place or the situation requires police intervention, please report to Sussex Police via 111 or if at immediate risk, 999.

## **8. Responding to reports**

8.1. When we receive your report, we aim to respond within five working days. We will:

- Allocate a caseworker who will listen to you, record your complaint and each report of anti-social behaviour you make, and find out what outcome you would like to see.
- Carry out a risk assessment to ascertain what the impact of the alleged conduct is on you and your household
- Where appropriate, we will encourage you to contact your neighbour to address the issue in the first instance
- Offer appropriate advice and support to you
- Take appropriate steps to investigate and address allegations in a swift and joined up manner (where assistance is needed from other agencies)
- Provide an action plan to you setting out what actions we will take and what is expected of you
- Contact you regularly to keep you informed.
- We may install sound recording equipment to gather independent evidence of noise

## 9. Investigation

- 9.1. To investigate any anti-social behaviour complaint, it is vitally important that all incidents are logged, as this means that any patterns of behaviour can be acted upon quickly, and all evidence will be available in the event of legal proceedings. Therefore we will ask you to provide a log of incidents. We will work with you to find the best method for collecting this information, which could include:
- Using diary sheets
  - Using the ASB app on a smart phone to record and log incidents ( caseworkers can assist in the setting up of the App)
  - Directly emailing or phoning the officer allocated to a case.
  - Reporting online at [https://my.crawley.gov.uk/service/Tell\\_Us\\_About\\_A\\_Problem](https://my.crawley.gov.uk/service/Tell_Us_About_A_Problem)
- 9.2. We also ask all customers to respond to any contact we make with you as soon as possible, and in reasonable timeframe so that all information can be acted on in a timely way.
- 9.3. If you do not provide completed diary sheets or respond to communications about your case, this may prevent us from being able to progress your case, which may result in the case being closed. If you are experiencing any difficulty keeping these records or communicating with us, please speak to us.
- 9.4. If we are investigating complaints of anti-social behaviour about you, we will:
- Allocate a caseworker to investigate the reports.
  - Contact you to discuss the complaints and listen to your version of events
  - Suggest what you need to do to stop the impact of your behaviour on others
  - Provide relevant support and advice to you, and if appropriate contact and work with other relevant agencies to help resolve the anti-social behaviour.

- Inform you if your behaviour could be in breach of your tenancy agreement, if we are considering legal enforcement action and what the result of this action might be for you. This may not be possible if your behaviour is very serious and has a significant impact on others or if the problem escalates quickly

## **10. Support**

- 10.1. We understand that experiencing or being accused of perpetrating anti-social behaviour can be very distressing. We will offer relevant support and advice to both complainants and alleged perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.
- 10.2. Support measures may include, as appropriate to the situation:
- Installation of CCTV
  - Provision of, or support to access equipment to reduce noise transfer between properties.
  - Referrals to support agencies such as Victim Support and Crawley's Wellbeing Team.
  - Regular communication with the victim and perpetrators.
  - Referrals to, and liaison with, other agencies to support either party.
  - Translation, interpreting and alternative methods of recording incidents where required.
- 10.3. Where behaviour is continued and has a detrimental effect on others, and the perpetrator does not engage with support services, enforcement action may become necessary.
- 10.4. For issues to be resolved, it is important that all parties treat each other respectfully. Should comments or actions (spoken and in writing) become abusive or intimidating from any party, or towards our staff, we may take the decision to stop investigations until an atmosphere of safety is restored. Alternatively, we may consider legal action and reporting to the police.

## **11. Partnership Working**

- 11.1. The Regulator of Social Housing, under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, requires registered housing providers to co-operate with relevant partners to help improve social, environmental, and economic wellbeing in their areas and to work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods.
- 11.2. We work in partnership with a number of other partners to prevent and deter nuisance and anti-social behaviour and tackle it when it arises. Internally, these include the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Community Wardens, Community Development, Environmental Health, Crawley Homes, Planning, Amenity Services and Legal Services. More widely, we work with include schools, the police, registered social landlords, mental health service, social services, and members of the community.
- 11.3. Prevention work within our community could involve working with our Community Development team, Crawley Wellbeing Team and external providers to engage people



into diversional activities to prevent/stop involvement in anti-social behaviour within the Community.

- 11.4. Criminal matters should be reported to Sussex Police. If it is appropriate for the police to take responsibility for investigating an incident, we may work with them to support their investigation.

## **12. Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review**

- 12.1. Victims of repeat anti-social behaviour have the right to request an Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review (formerly known as the community trigger) if they have reported incidents repeatedly and feel that either no action or inadequate action has been taken to address the problem.
- 12.2. The ASB case review can be used by the victim of ASB or any person acting on their behalf, such as a family member, friend, carer, councillor, MP or other professional person, if they have the victim's consent. This gives victims and communities the right to request a review of their case and bring agencies together to take a joined-up, problem solving approach to find a solution: it is not a complaints procedure.
- 12.3. The Council has a statutory duty to attend case review meetings together with the other relevant bodies. The Council also has a duty to publish their ASB Case Review Policy and data on ASB case review applications received annually. The Council will promote awareness of the ASB case review process and the relevant processes.

## **13. Vexatious Complaints**

- 13.1. We are responsible for ensuring that customers are treated fairly and our investigation is proportionate and justified. If we believe that the complaints that you have made are false, we will consider taking appropriate action against you, which could include legal action against you and/or your tenancy.
- 13.2. Such behaviour might include:
  - making allegations which we discover are false.
  - complaining about someone in a 'vexatious' way, which might mean repeatedly making petty allegations.
  - repeatedly contacting us, whether by phone, email or in person, to make the same allegation to different employees, or to make similar allegations in slightly different ways.
  - unreasonably refusing to accept our decision on the nature and extent of any enforcement action in a case.

## **14. Staff Training, Monitoring and review**

- 14.1. Staff receive appropriate training in accordance with their role, especially with regard to legislation and dealing with potentially vulnerable people. This includes relevant refresher training and training as part of an induction schedule for new staff.

- 14.2. Staff receive appropriate training in accordance with their role, especially with regard to legislation and dealing with potentially vulnerable people. This includes relevant refresher training and training as part of an induction schedule for new staff.
- 14.3. We monitor the quality of this service, via satisfaction surveys and performance indicators and take steps to improve service in response to customer feedback. Annually, we are required to report instances of anti-social behaviour and hate incidents in relation to the number of low cost rental dwellings we manage. We will use this information to benchmark against other organisations and to making improvements within our housing services.

## **15.Consultation**

- 15.1. Members of the community, our tenants and leaseholders and relevant agencies have been consulted in the development of this policy via our website, social media, survey and focus groups.
- 15.2. All policies have the agreement of Crawley Homes' Senior Management Team (SMT) and relevant Portfolio Holders)

## **16.Equalities Implications**

- 16.1. We have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:
  - a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
  - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 16.2. Protected Characteristics are age, disability, race/ethnicity, pregnancy and maternity, religion, sexual orientation, sex, gender reassignment and marriage/civil partnership.
- 16.3. An Equality Impact screening assessment on this policy has been completed. Our assessment indicates a likely positive impact on members of the community who hold a protected characteristic.
- 16.4. To mitigate against any negative impact on a person as a result of a protected characteristic, a specific Equalities Impact Assessment is also carried out on a casework basis before taking each legal enforcement step, for example where the perpetrator of the said action has or is suspected to have a protected characteristic that impacts their behaviour. When considering proportionality, the Council will consider whether other remedies would be more appropriate than taking enforcement action and are likely to resolve the problem in a different way.
- 16.5. All members of staff are expected to treat all persons involved fairly and with respect and with due regard to their individual needs or accessibility requirements. A summary of this policy is available in easy read format and translation upon request. Interpreting services are available as required.

16.6. Managers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is fairly applied, with due regard to each person's individual circumstances and for adequate training for staff on equality issues.

### **17.Complaints or disputes about this policy**

17.1If you feel that this policy has been applied incorrectly you can escalate this through the council's complaints policy [Complaints | Crawley GOV](#)

## **APPENDIX : Helpful Contacts**

### **Anti-Social Behaviour Team**

Email: [asb@crawley.gov.uk](mailto:asb@crawley.gov.uk) Call: 01293 438438

Website: [www.crawley.gov.uk/asb](http://www.crawley.gov.uk/asb)

### **Community Wardens**

Call: 07884 492324. Lines are open seven days a week 5.30pm-10pm.

### **Police**

Police emergency: 999

Police non-emergency: 101

### **West Sussex County Council**

Call: 01243 777100

Website: [www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)

West Sussex Adults Carepoint 01293 642121

Email: [socialcare@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:socialcare@westsussex.gov.uk)

Children Services - Children's Access Point (CAP).

Call: 01403 229900

Email: [cap@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:cap@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk)

### **West Sussex Mediation Service**

The Mediation Service is an independent service which is free to everyone who lives in Crawley. Mediation is a way of helping people to resolve their disagreements with the assistance of an independent third party – the mediator.

Park House, North Street RH12 1RN Horsham, UK

Call: 0300 200 0025

Website: [www.wsms.org.uk](http://www.wsms.org.uk) Email: [info@wsms.org.uk](mailto:info@wsms.org.uk)

### **Victim Support**

National charity giving free and confidential help to victims of crime, witnesses, their family, friends and anyone else affected.

St Pauls Methodist Church, Woodfield Road Crawley, West Sussex RH10 8ER

Call: 0808 1689 111

Website: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

## **Worth Services**

Independent domestic violence advisor service to support people affected by domestic abuse in West Sussex.

Worth Services, Urgent Treatment Centre West Green Drive Crawley, West Sussex RH11 7DH

Call: 01293 600300 ext. 3510

Contact WORTH:

Email [DomesticAbuseServicesCentral@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:DomesticAbuseServicesCentral@westsussex.gov.uk)

Tel: 07834 968539 or 033 022 28181

Contact details on WSCC page

Website: [www.worthservices.org](http://www.worthservices.org)

## **Citizens Advice Bureau**

Free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities

The Orchard, 1-2 Gleneagles Court, Brighton Road Southgate, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6AD

Call: 08444 111 444

Website: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Local Advice Line number: 0844 4771171.

Website: [www.centraisussexcab.org.uk](http://www.centraisussexcab.org.uk)

<http://www.advicewestsussex.org.uk/>

0808 278 7969 Adviceline

## **Shelter**

Housing and homelessness charity provides free, confidential advice to people with all kinds of housing problems.

Call: 0344 515 1749 – doesn't look as though there is a local contact – not on website anyway

Housing Helpline number: 0808 800 4444

Website: [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

## **CGL**

Free and confidential specialist drug and alcohol treatment.

Call: 0330 128 1113

[www.changegrowlive](http://www.changegrowlive)

<https://www.changegrowlive.org/> - correct web address