



SHEFFIELD
CITY
COUNCIL

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

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This document outlines the approach Sheffield City Council will take when dealing with reports of anti-social behaviour.

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This document is the responsibility of:

Anti-Social Behaviour Team
Safer Neighbourhoods | Communities Service | Neighbourhoods
Sheffield City Council

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Part 1: Introduction

1.1 Our Approach to Anti-Social Behaviour

The purpose of this policy is to set out Sheffield City Council's (the Council's) approach to managing anti-social behaviour.

Sheffield aims to be one of the safest cities in the United Kingdom and an effective response to anti-social behaviour is a strategic priority for the Council.

We believe that everybody should live in strong and connected neighbourhoods which they are happy to call home. To achieve this all residents and visitors to Sheffield should feel safe and secure, and should not suffer from anti-social behaviour, nuisance, or harassment.

Anti-social behaviour is unacceptable and will always be taken seriously by the Council. We expect people to show consideration and tolerance for their neighbours and the wider community.

Our focus is on reducing anti-social behaviour and the harm caused to victims and communities. Working in partnership with other services, we will take steps to prevent anti-social behaviour from occurring, and where it does, we aim to take swift and effective action to find a lasting solution.

1.2 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to any person who may live in, work in, or visit Sheffield, including all housing tenures.

The Council is required by the Housing Act 1996, section 218A (as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, section 12, and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, schedule 11 paragraph 23) to publish a Statement of Policy and Procedures for dealing with occurrences of anti-social behaviour. This policy has been informed by the legal and regulatory framework for tackling anti-social behaviour which includes:

- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Housing Act 1985
- The Housing Act 1996
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990
- The Housing Act 1988
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- The Equality Act 2010
- Localism Act 2011
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Human Rights Act 1998

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following information (click on links for further details):

- [Sheffield Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2021-25](#)
- [Sheffield Domestic and Sexual Abuse strategy 2018-2022](#) (currently under review)
- [Privacy notice – anti-social behaviour services](#)
- [Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- [The Council's Environmental Regulation Policy](#)

Values

Our anti-social behaviour service commitments reflect our corporate values:



We are here to reduce the harm caused by anti-social behaviour. We put people at the heart of what we do by listening and responding to the concerns of all those involved, and by ensuring our services are focused on reducing risk and harm, and on improving quality of life.



The way we deliver our services is based on assessment of evidence and factual information. The information we provide to the public and other services is based on this approach.



Working together with each other and with our partners is at the very core of everything we do. Our work is underpinned by the statutory community safety partnership, called The Safer Sheffield Partnership.

1.3 Aims of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To ensure the Council complies with its legal obligations and strategic objectives.
- Work with residents and communities to empower and support them in tackling and resolving anti-social behaviour.
- Adopt a harm centred approach, where the behaviour and the harm it is causing is considered when making case decisions, such as whether a report is anti-social behaviour, and what action is necessary. A harm centred approach to anti-social behaviour promotes taking into account the impact behaviour has on those who experience it.
- Take proportionate action to resolve anti-social behaviour, with an aim to intervene early and prevent escalation by using informal remedies and restorative approaches.
- Resolve/address/tackle anti-social behaviour in partnership with key partners and stakeholders.
- To adopt the [Home Office Anti-Social Behaviour Principles](#) which promote a consistent approach to understanding and addressing anti-social behaviour.

1.4 How we Define Anti-Social Behaviour

The term anti-social behaviour is used to describe a variety of issues which can cause nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm, or distress or which have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of those in the locality. This can range from a minor issue to serious criminal activity.

The statutory definition of anti-social behaviour as contained in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, is as follows:

- 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,

We assess each report based on the circumstances, such as the evidence available, the impact on the victim and the best way to achieve a lasting solution.

The Council does not tolerate **hate crime and hate incidents** and will apply this policy to ensure robust action is taken against perpetrators, and support is provided to victims.

We will train staff so that they are able to identify signs of possible **domestic abuse** while dealing with reports of anti-social behaviour. If we find evidence of domestic abuse during an investigation, we will work with the victim to identify and seek appropriate support. Wherever possible we will also take action against the perpetrator.

The Council expects people to be tolerant and considerate, both in terms of their own behaviours but also those that they experience.

The examples below illustrate the types of behaviours which we generally will and will not consider to be anti-social behaviour.

We will consider and determine if the behaviour reported is unreasonable and if there are any enforcement actions available to us.

Examples of behaviours we generally consider to be anti-social behaviour are:

- Hate crime / hate incidents.
- Playing unreasonably loud music/television/video games or similar.
- Threatening or verbally abusing another person. This could include threats of violence, such as to kill or harm someone.
- Damaging property, including defacing a building with graffiti.
- Violent incident. We define a violent incident as one in which physical violence was used for example attacking another person.
- Failing to control a pet.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol, drug production or drug dealing.
- Incorrect disposal of rubbish, for example fly-tipping.
- Anti-Social use of vehicles for example off-road riding of motorbikes or quad bikes, anti-social parking, and misuse of road vehicles.

Examples of behaviours we generally consider not to be anti-social are:

- Reasonable household noise. For example, vacuuming and the use of other domestic appliances, opening/closing doors, using stairs.
- Positioning of wheelie bins.

- Boundary disputes.
- Carrying out DIY at reasonable times and for reasonable durations.
- Complaints of people looking at, ignoring, or staring at you where there is no other associated offence (such as Stalking).
- Babies crying.
- A one-off party if noise was the only issue and it is unlikely to be repeated.
- Children playing (including ball games). We will not consider this to be anti-social behaviour unless there is evidence of other issues such as verbal abuse, harassment, or deliberate damage.
- Minor issues such as cooking smells or items on washing lines.

These types of cases require a different response. The Council's involvement will be limited, in most cases we will provide guidance and tips around how the complainants themselves can resolve issues with their neighbours or we may refer the complainant to a mediation or support service.

Expectations

We expect everyone to:

- be respectful, considerate, and mindful of anything which spoils the quality of life of other people.
- be tolerant, and accept the reasonable needs, differing lifestyles, cultures, and choices of other people.
- where possible develop and strengthen relationships with neighbours and the wider community.
- take responsibility for minor personal disputes with their neighbours, where necessary we will offer advice and information to enable this to happen effectively.
- Not make untrue, 'vexatious' reports or allegations against other people.

If someone is suffering anti-social behaviour, we will do all that we can to help them. We can only do this by working together and we therefore expect people who ask for our help to cooperate with reasonable requests to assist us in resolving their case.

This may include:

- Agreeing to self-resolution actions such as talking to their neighbour.
- Keeping appointments with us.
- Keeping a record of incidents and using available technologies to capture and send evidence to us.
- Reporting criminal activity to the Police.
- Taking part in mediation.
- Being reasonable and respectful in the way they report issues and deal with staff.

Without this cooperation we may not be able to resolve the problem.

Additional Information for Sheffield City Council Housing Tenants:

Tenants are required to comply with the conditions set out in their tenancy agreement (called 'You and Your Home').

Condition 16 covers anti-social behaviour:

"16. You, your household and visitors must not do anything which is illegal, dangerous

or which would cause nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm or distress to other people. This condition applies within the boundary of and in the locality of your property.”

Condition 17 covers anti-social behaviour towards employees.

“17. You, your household and visitors must not cause nuisance or annoyance, harassment, alarm, or distress towards any person employed in connection with the exercise of our housing management functions.”

The Housing & Neighbourhood Service will take appropriate action if tenancy conditions are breached.

1.5 Roles & Responsibilities

When someone reports an anti-social behaviour issue to the Council, the appropriate service in the Neighbourhoods Directorate will assess it to determine the necessary action. We will give advice if the issue needs to be dealt with by another service (such as the Police or a Registered Housing Provider).

Various Council services investigate reports of anti-social behaviour from residents across Sheffield and will work together to address the issue.

The **Anti-Social Behaviour Team** is responsible for leading on serious/complex anti-social behaviour cases across the city. It also has uniformed officers to help gather evidence, prevent issues, and support communities affected by anti-social behaviour.

The **Community Safety Team** have officers who link with police and other partners to ensure a coordinated approach to problem-solving in cases of serious organised crime and associated anti-social behaviour.

The **Housing Service** investigate reports of anti-social behaviour involving Council tenants and leaseholders. Cases are assessed on a harm centred approach to ensure that victims receive the correct service. The Housing Service access and use a range of interventions and legal powers to seek early resolution to anti-social behaviour cases.

Environmental Protection Services investigate and take action in statutory nuisance cases including noise. They also have powers to take enforcement action against perpetrators for issues such as dog fouling, littering, and fly-tipping.

Part 2 Supporting Vulnerable People

2.1 Supporting Victims and Witnesses

We recognise that experiencing anti-social behaviour can be a worrying and stressful time. We understand the harm it causes and impact it has on quality of life.

We will provide a victim focused service by assessing the impact the behaviour has and tailor support based on individual needs.

We will keep in regular contact with victims and witnesses throughout the investigation and ensure they understand what action we are taking and why. We will agree how often we contact them based on individual needs and preferences.

We will also explain how, wherever possible, we will keep their report confidential (see Section 6 below for more information).

If we are unable to take action or if we determine that the behaviour is not anti-social, we will inform the complainant at the earliest opportunity, explain why the decision has been made and give relevant advice about next steps.

We will give advice, support, and guidance throughout our investigation.

We will adopt a harm centred approach. This means considering the level of harm caused to victims to determine the urgency of our response and the best course of action. To do this we will carry out a harm risk assessment to identify the impact the anti-social behaviour is having on those suffering from it and will consider:

- Evidence available (e.g. type of behaviour, frequency, severity).
- Vulnerability and impact on the victim.
- The best way to resolve the problem.

Examples of how we may support victims based on their individual circumstances are:

- Provide a single point of contact (for example their Neighbourhood Officer if they are a Council tenant).
- Referral or signposting to other organisations for support (for example Victim Support).
- Coordination of action and support between organisations.

2.2 Support for Vulnerable Perpetrators

We will adopt a harm reduction enforcement approach. Where necessary we will work with the person responsible for causing anti-social behaviour to identify support needs which may address the underlying causes of their behaviour. This may be for reasons such as drug or alcohol addiction, mental health issues or support with parenting. Doing this may be the best way to find a lasting solution to the problem.

If someone has been offered support and their anti-social behaviour continues, we will take appropriate action.

We will ensure that any action we take is reasonable and proportionate and meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and any other relevant legislation. We will make reasonable adjustments to our policy and procedures where necessary.

Part 3. Taking Action

3.1 Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour.

The Council provide a range of ways to report anti-social behaviour, [see our website for further information](#) or ring 2734567.

When a report of anti-social behaviour is made to the Council, the relevant service will assess it to determine the most appropriate action. We will give advice if it needs to be dealt with by another organisation (such as the Police or a Registered Housing Provider).

3.2 Overview

We will investigate reports of anti-social behaviour and seek both sides of the story where necessary.

We will use the full range of tools and powers available to tackle anti-social behaviour.

We will decide on the most appropriate action based on factors such as the evidence available, the impact on the victim and the best way to achieve a lasting solution.

The action we take will be proportionate to the behaviour exhibited and circumstances of the case.

In general, we will aim to use 'informal' interventions and give perpetrators of anti-social behaviour a reasonable amount of time to change their behaviour before escalating action. However, if the evidence and circumstances justify it, we may take legal action straightaway.

There will be times where the Council is not the most appropriate lead agency. We will work in partnership and coordinate enforcement with other organisations and Council teams to ensure that the most appropriate action is taken.

3.3 Preventative Action

We will take steps to try and prevent anti-social behaviour from occurring in the first place.

We will also work with partner organisations to:

- identify areas/issues of concern at an early stage.
- identify support to vulnerable people where appropriate.

Prevention of anti-social behaviour is built into our Housing Services Allocations Policy. We will take steps to prevent people responsible for causing anti-social behaviour from obtaining or moving between Council tenancies. These steps are set out in our [Housing Allocations Policy](#).

In addition, the Council has introduced Introductory Tenancies to help prevent anti-social behaviour, by ensuring new tenants are aware of their responsibilities and the consequences of not complying with their tenancy conditions. Introductory Tenancies can be extended, or ended more quickly than Secure Tenancies.

3.4 Informal Action

Where appropriate, we will use informal actions to attempt to resolve issues at an early stage.

These actions may include:

- Encouraging residents to be good neighbours and providing advice and practical information on how neighbours can discuss matters together if appropriate.
- Warning letters / Breach of Tenancy Caution.
- Mediation.
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (An agreement made by an individual to the police and local authority to not commit anti-social behaviour).
- Restricting rehousing priority.

3.5 Legal Action

We will take legal action where it is necessary to resolve the issue. This may be because an urgent incident or breach of tenancy has occurred, or it may be a result of continuous and/or escalating incidents which have not been resolved by informal means.

Decisions on legal action and what type of legal action is most appropriate will be taken by the Council, taking into account all relevant information, and based on the facts of each case including individual circumstances.

Legal action we can take includes (this list may change due to new/amended legislation):

- Injunction (including attaching a power of arrest where necessary).
- Closure Power.
- Community Protection Notice.
- Abatement Notice for statutory nuisance (and prosecution if the notice is breached).
- Possession (eviction) proceedings including use of the Absolute Ground for Possession (Council housing tenants).
- Public Spaces Protection Order.
- Criminal Behaviour Order (where the Council are the prosecuting authority)

4. Working in Partnership

We will work in partnership with other organisations to share information, coordinate action and address support needs.

Anti-social behaviour investigations may require involvement from various Council departments, and external organisations. We will work closely with other services such as South Yorkshire Police, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, support providers, and other landlords. It may be that these organisations have access to a more appropriate enforcement action.

We also ensure that our teams who are investigating anti-social behaviour cases work with our support services including safeguarding and early help teams, youth justice, education, health (including mental health) and youth services. We recognise that those experiencing anti-social behaviour and those responsible for causing it, may have support needs, and we will offer referrals to support services when appropriate. We may work with other partners such as offender management services, the universities in Sheffield and voluntary organisations when a specific issue arises.

Where appropriate we may discuss reports of anti-social behaviour at multi-agency forums to ensure that a coordinated response is taken, involving all the relevant partners to resolve the problem.

We will ensure that the right action is taken, at the right time and by the right service, in order to provide the most effective response to anti-social behaviour in all cases.

This may mean we act after, and as a result of, action taken by another organisation (for example taking possession proceedings as a result of a criminal conviction) or we may ask another organisation to take action as an alternative to us using our powers.

5. Ending our investigation

5.1 Closing the case.

We will regularly review cases and close them at the appropriate time. We will aim to do this only when the situation is fully resolved, and no further action is required. However, in some cases we may have to close a case because we have concluded that no action is possible (for example because evidence is not available).

We will always aim to discuss the reason we intend to close the case with the person who reported the issue. Where necessary we will also give them advice on what to do next.

If there are further incidents reported after a case has been closed, we will take appropriate action based on the circumstances of the report. This may mean we start a new investigation, or we escalate the case from the last action. In some cases, we may decide that a new investigation is not required, for example where the report is of a similar nature to something we have already investigated and concluded that action is not possible. We will always explain what we are doing and why to the person making the report.

5.2 Measuring Performance

We will evaluate our performance using a range of different measures. This may include carrying out customer experience surveys.

We will ensure our performance results are available to customers and we will use this information to improve our services.

5.3 Training for Officers

We will ensure our workforce has the necessary skills, tools, and knowledge to do their jobs and will ensure that adequate training is provided to officers who manage anti-social behaviour cases.

Our specialist teams will have appropriate professional level qualifications.

5.4 Feedback and Complaints

This section relates to complaints about the Council's response to reports of anti-social behaviour, not about the report itself.

We welcome any feedback from customers and will seek to fully resolve any complaints about our service. Any complaints about our service will be dealt with under the Council's complaints procedure.

If customers remain dissatisfied with the outcome following the completion of the Council's complaints process, the case can be raised with the relevant Ombudsman who will review the Council's actions.

The [Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman](#) deals with complaints about most Council services other than social housing.

The [Housing Ombudsman](#) deals with complaints about housing organisations

5.5 ASB Case Review

The ASB Case Review (also known as the Community Trigger) is a victim's right to request a formal review of the action taken in relation to an issue they have reported. It

is available to individuals, community groups, and businesses, who are suffering anti-social behaviour where they feel that the organisation(s) involved are not doing enough to resolve an ongoing problem.

A request for an ASB Case Review can be made to the Council or South Yorkshire Police.

Where it meets the locally defined thresholds, the Council & South Yorkshire Police, alongside any other organisations involved, will carry out a case review and where necessary, make recommendations on any further action which can be taken to resolve the problem.

The threshold for an ASB Case Review in South Yorkshire is:

“You have reported 3 separate incidents relating to the same or similar issue of anti-social behaviour within the last 6 months”.

Further information about ASB Case Reviews can be found on the websites of the [Council](#), [South Yorkshire Police](#) or [Office of the Police Crime Commissioner](#).

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

The Council will treat everyone with fairness and respect. We value diversity and work to promote equality and tackle unlawful discrimination.

We are committed to helping customers to access our services in a way that suits individual needs.

We will meet the requirements relating to equality and diversity laid down in the Equality Act 2010. Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 contains the ‘Public Sector Equality Duty’, under which the Council as a public authority must, in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The way we deal with anti-social behaviour, as set out in this policy, will reflect, and adhere to these statutory requirements, and the Council’s values.

6. Confidentiality & Sharing Information

We will seek information from and share information with other Council teams and other organisations for the purpose of effectively investigating and tackling anti-social behaviour.

We will ensure that we share information in a way that meets our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations.

The way we share information to tackle anti-social behaviour is covered by an Information Sharing Agreement.

We will respect privacy and requests to remain anonymous. We will not tell people who are alleged to be causing anti-social behaviour, who has complained about them unless we have permission, or we are required to do so by a court. There may be some occasions where it is difficult to protect the identity of the victim due to the nature of the report for example a noise complaint between two neighbours where no other properties are in the locality.

If we receive an anonymous report, we will take all reasonable steps to investigate the behaviour and provide informal solutions however reporting a matter anonymously will limit the actions we can take.

We will investigate reports made on behalf of a victim by a third party but will require the victims' consent to this before any investigation can commence.

There will be times where we cannot guarantee confidentiality, even when someone requests it. This could include situations where we identify child protection or other safeguarding issues or where a criminal offence is suspected or has taken place or where the court requires us to disclose our records to the Defendant in the course of legal proceedings.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Services Privacy Notice sets out what information we collect and how we use it: [Privacy notice | Sheffield City Council](#)