



PLYMOUTH COMMUNITY HOMES ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Version:	Draft
Lead Directorate:	Homes and Communities
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Approved by:	

1. Introduction

Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) recognises that anti-social behaviour (ASB) can be targeted against individuals, communities, the environment or our properties. This policy is intended to ensure that PCH is equipped to deal with occurrences of ASB when they are reported and is compliant with the requirements of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014, and the Housing Act 1988.

This policy applies to anyone living in or visiting a property owned by PCH. It also applies to residents living in neighbouring properties of different tenure and visitors to their properties.

PCH considers abusive or threatening behaviour towards its staff, contractors or agents to be a serious issue, which will be dealt with in accordance with this policy along with the Acceptable Behaviour policy.

2. Policy Objectives

We are committed to:

- Creating communities where people want to live and can do so peacefully, enjoying their homes without the fear of crime or ASB.
- Supporting residents to resolve issues of ASB within their communities.
- Investigating all complaints of ASB and taking prompt and appropriate action to tackle these problems effectively, in accordance with our ASB procedure.
- Promoting good neighbour relations and tolerance of lifestyle differences in line with our Good Neighbourhood Management Policy, where we feel that a report is not ASB.
- Meeting our legal obligations.
- Remaining impartial.
- Being flexible about how we respond to ASB at all stages in the process
- Being open about what we can and can't do, so that we manage individuals' expectations about the outcome of any case.
- Working with partners in relevant organisations to support victims and to develop consistent and effective measures to tackle ASB, hate crime and domestic abuse.
- Treating hate crime and domestic abuse as unacceptable behaviour. We will

follow our separate policy and procedure to deal with incidents of hate crime and domestic abuse.

3. Definitions

3.1 What is ASB?

We use the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 definition which says that “anti-social behaviour” means:

- (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.

We categorise reports of ASB as:

- Alcohol related
- Criminal behaviour / crime
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs / substance misuse / drug dealing
- Hate related incidents
- Misuse of communal areas or loitering
- Noise triaged as ASB
- Pets and animal nuisance
- Physical violence
- Vandalism and damage to property
- Verbal harassment, intimidation or threatening behaviour

We will do our utmost to promote good neighbour relations and tolerance of lifestyle differences in line with our Good Neighbourhood Management Policy where we feel that a reported incident does not fall into the category of ASB.

4. Tenant and Leaseholder Obligations

All tenants are bound by the terms of their tenancy agreements not to cause nuisance and annoyance to neighbours.

All leaseholders will be expected to abide by the terms and conditions of their lease agreement and any subsequent variations to the terms of that lease.

5. Responding to reports of ASB

When a resident reports an incident of ASB, we will listen and take the report seriously and sensitively.

We will take the complaint in whatever way the Reporting Person/s wishes to report it. For example, but not limited to reports made in person, via our website, the My PCH portal, by email, a social media platform, via a third party, or a nominated representative.

If the incident(s) are determined to not be classed as ASB, then the incident will be dealt with under our Good Neighbourhood Policy and the Reporting Person will be advised of our decision and how we intend to provide support and a resolution.

Our process for responding to reports of ASB consists of the following three stages:

Stage 1 – Reporting

- Once received, each report will be treated seriously and sensitively and an assessment made as to whether the incident falls under the category of ASB.

We will capture the details we need to open an ASB complaint and support the Reporting Person by agreeing the method and frequency of further communication.

We will triage all reports and use the following guidance to manage our response:

Where there is no deliberate intention	the incident will be handled through the Good Neighbourhood Management Policy.
Where there is no deliberate intention , but the behaviour lasts longer than 30 minutes at a time for more than 5 days in a row	this will be handled through the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.
Where there is deliberate intention	the incident will be handled through the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

Stage 2 – Investigation

- This is where we gather the information needed to inform how we can tailor our response and create a live action plan for the case.

We will offer appropriate advice and support to the person(s) responsible to stop the undesirable behaviour.

- Our initial response will be based on our objective to 'promote good neighbour

relations and tolerance of lifestyle differences'

We will ensure that every case goes through stages 1 and 2 and then the Housing Officer will use their professional judgement to determine what resolution options are appropriate or whether the case needs to be closed after being investigated.

Stage 3 – Resolution

This is where we endeavour to find a solution to address the issues and close the case as 'resolved', with the Reporting Person being satisfied with the outcome.

We will do this by:

- Bringing complaints made to the attention of those being complained about to give them an opportunity to put things right and give appropriate warnings about future conduct, including potential for further enforcement action if proportionate.
- Identifying any potential support needs for both the Reporting Person and the Subject of the report. Our approach is intended to be person centred and aims to support the Subject to cease or alter the unacceptable behaviour.

We will offer a range of resolutions, and we will tailor our approach to each case. The types of resolutions include:

- Multi agency working
- Warning letters
- Mediation
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts/Good Neighbour Agreements
- Considering civil legal options available to us

Before considering legal remedies, we will usually consider any disabilities, protected characteristics and vulnerabilities that the Subject has unless it is an emergency.

If a complaint relates to a private resident, we will be open and transparent with our tenants in our limitations, but our approach intends to support our residents by liaising with organisations who have a role in resolution.

6. Expectations of the Reporting Person

In order to allow PCH to investigate the report(s) fully we require the Reporting Person to:

- Provide as much detail as possible about incident(s) including dates, times and a full description of the behaviour/s

- Gather and share any evidence with us that support their complaint/s
- Recognise that resolving ASB can take time and that sometimes that this is beyond our control
- Maintain respectful interactions with us and be willing to cooperate to resolve the situation

7. Managing ASB

PCH will manage all complaints of ASB in accordance with our ASB Procedure which can be found on our website. This will include thoroughly investigating all complaints of ASB. We will take prompt and appropriate action to tackle these problems effectively.

We will ensure our staff have the right tools to deal with cases of ASB. We will provide ongoing training for staff to manage ASB effectively according to best practice and current legislation.

We will use an integrated electronic ASB case management system so that all ASB cases can be effectively managed.

We will, where appropriate, carry out risk assessments in order to give an initial assessment of the possible risks to the Reporting Person/s, witnesses, the wider neighbourhood, the Officers investigating, and other Officers who may visit the address.

PCH is committed to remaining impartial in managing ASB cases and will work with all parties involved to identify potential support needs and encourage residents to seek the identified support to assist with resolving the ASB and sustain their tenancy.

PCH expects all staff dealing with ASB to keep precise, timely and accurate records of all communications and actions taken during the management of each case.

8. Domestic Abuse

We recognise that residents who are experiencing Domestic Abuse are significantly more likely to have ASB complaints made against them.

For complaints that relate to arguing, vocalizations of trauma, stress, upset, or if the Reporting Person suggests that they suspect domestic abuse is occurring in a neighbouring address, we will gather information, make enquiries to ensure that our approach is victim focused and supportive to both the victim survivor, their children and any residents that are also affected in line with our Domestic Abuse Policy.

9. Closing the ASB case

There are six reasons when we might close a case:

1. That all the issues have been resolved to the Reporting Person/s satisfaction
2. We have taken all available action to resolve the matter and cannot take any further action without new evidence
3. Another agency is dealing with the case, and it no longer requires involvement
4. Following our investigation, no evidence is found to prove that incidents of anti-social behaviour have occurred.
5. The Reporting Person/s has failed to provide evidence, and we cannot take any further action without their support
6. We have been unable to contact the Reporting Person/s for 6 weeks and we have made reasonable efforts to contact them

10. Working with other organisations

PCH will work with partners in relevant organisations to develop consistent and effective measures to tackle ASB and to support everyone affected involved.

11. Information sharing and Data Protection

PCH is committed to being open about how we are managing ASB so that we can manage individuals' expectations about the outcome. This will include keeping reporting persons informed about what measures we are taking.

In applying this policy, we will comply with PCH's Data Protection Policy and ensure that the personal information supplied by customers is protected at all times. Any staff found abusing the ASB case management system will be subject to the PCH Disciplinary Policy.

Within the provisions of our Data Protection Policy, we will share information with other agencies including Devon and Cornwall Police and Plymouth City Council where this is appropriate.

12. Monitoring performance

PCH is committed to monitoring and improving its performance in managing and resolving ASB. Monitoring will include:

- Regular performance reporting
- Tenant satisfaction measure (TSMs)

- Benchmarking our service against other Registered Providers
- Reviewing customer experience using satisfaction surveys

13. Equality, Inclusion and Diversity

PCH will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equalities Act 2010.

PCH will make this policy available in other languages and formats on request. PCH will carry out an equality impact assessment on this policy, in line with our corporate procedure.

14. Review

PCH will monitor this policy to ensure it meets good practice and current legislation and will review it in accordance with our review timetable for all policies.

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