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Anti-social behaviour

What this guide is about

This guide explains what you need to do if you or someone you know is suffering due to anti-social behaviour.

Who is this guide for

For people who live in a Progress Housing Group home.

Bitesize summary

- Anti-social behaviour is a range of behaviours that can cause nuisance and annoyance, or harm and distress to a person.
- If you are a tenant, then contact us to report the issues. Don't suffer in silence.
- It is important that you keep a record of the incidents and the behaviour, as this will be of great help in investigating the behaviour and tackling it.
- We have a number of ways that we can prevent, tackle and resolve anti-social behaviour.
- If anyone is in immediate danger or a crime is in progress; please call the police immediately on 999.

We want everyone to enjoy daily life and feel safe in their home and community.

We know that anti-social behaviour can have a disruptive and damaging effect on people.

If you or someone you know is suffering due to anti-social behaviour, we want to know about it.

Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour, or ASB for short, is where a person's behaviour causes, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to other people.

Examples of behaviour that we may consider ASB include:

- Criminal activity (including committing offences that could result in arrest)
- Damage to property
- Dangerous dogs and continual barking
- Domestic abuse
- Threats of or actual violence, intimidation and harassment
- Illegal drug use or the production, storage or selling of drugs
- Alcohol or drug-related anti-social behaviour
- Noise nuisance, such as shouting and playing loud music
- Hate crime.

If you suffer from abuse due to your race, religion or transgender identity, disability, sexual orientation, this is a **hate crime**. Please contact us for more information about how we can help you, or visit www.progressgroup.org.uk.

If you feel it is safe to do so, try to resolve the issue by talking to the person causing the ASB. Sometimes a simple explanation of how their behaviour affects you, and a polite request for it to stop or be limited somehow is enough.

However, we recognise that talking to the person in some circumstances may not work or may be inappropriate for you.

How to report ASB

You can report ASB online at www.progressgroup.org.uk by:

- Logging into your online tenant account
- Emailing us
- Live chat – available Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

You can also:

- Call us on 0333 320 4555
- Visit or write to us - Sumner House, 21 King Street, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 2LW
- Ask a friend, councillor or MP to report ASB on your behalf.
- Report a crime anonymously to Crimestoppers at 0800 555 111 or www.crimestoppers-uk.org

If anyone is in immediate danger or a crime is in progress; please call the police immediately on 999. If it is not an emergency, please use the 101 non-emergency number.

Domestic abuse

Our charity, Key, provides our domestic abuse support services.

If you are suffering from abuse at home or know someone who is, please call Key's confidential domestic abuse helpline on 01772 435865. The line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You can also use live chat with an advisor on www.keycharity.org.uk, text 07790 971237 or email clarehouse@keycharity.org.uk

Women experiencing domestic abuse can also contact the National Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247 to talk in strict confidence and to get advice.

Men experiencing domestic violence can contact the Men's Advice Line at 0808 801 0327.

Recording ASB

We will record your complaint and take details of what is affecting you and the person affecting you. We will also ask for relevant information or supporting evidence that may be required, including the dates and times of incidents, what happened, who was involved, and how it made you feel.

Sometimes an investigation is not possible, for example, when a complaint is anonymous, and more information

must be required to enable an investigation.

Sometimes, someone suffering from ASB might be frightened to reveal their identity. We encourage people suffering from ASB to come forward in person so that they can provide us with as much detail as possible so that we can investigate their concerns.

Investigating ASB

If we can investigate your report, one of our community safety officers will contact you within five working days (or one working day for domestic abuse, hate crime, violence or threats of violence).

We will introduce ourselves and explain how we can help. We will:

- Ask for details regarding the issues affecting you
- Ask for details of others who have witnessed the ASB and who we may need to speak to
- Ask questions to enable us to assess the risk and vulnerability of you and your household or others affected by the ASB.

We will then:

- Consider whether we need to make any support referrals
- Discuss evidence-gathering and provide you with diary sheets and/ or agree on other methods of recording further incidents, such as audio equipment (The Noise App), photographs, video recordings of incidents, etc.

- Consider any safeguarding concerns for the person causing the ASB or their household
- Discuss how we can work with other partners where appropriate, such as the police
- Discuss possible early intervention measures to resolve matters quickly, such as visiting the person causing the ASB to discuss allegations of tenancy breaches, issue tenancy warnings, and make referrals to mediation
- Ask for your permission to visit the person causing the ASB. We will not disclose your identity unless you permit us to do so. Please note that we may be unable to maintain anonymity if the incident details identify you.

If the matter is urgent and there is a serious risk of violence, we will consider whether an application for a without-notice injunction is appropriate.

We will be clear on what action we can and can't take and agree on an action plan with you.

Taking action

The next steps will depend on the particular nature of the case and the action plan we agreed on. We may:

- Speak to other witnesses
- Gather further evidence
- Review our case management system to see if we have received previous complaints and whether any warning markers exist

- Write to the person causing the ASB to advise them of the allegations received and arrange to visit them to discuss matters
- Work with our partners, such as police, fire service, social services, drug and alcohol support services, and mental health teams to take a joined-up approach
- Consider non-legal tools and early intervention measures
- Consider legal action if it is reasonable and fair to do so.

We will monitor the case and keep you updated as your case progresses.

Different ways of tackling ASB

We aim to tackle what can often be diverse or complex issues around ASB using a range of tools, including prevention, support and enforcement, in a proportionate and flexible response to the challenges that ASB presents, including the following:

- Issuing written **tenancy warnings**
- Signposting perpetrators of ASB to **support services**, which may help reduce or stop the ASB from repeating
- **Acceptable behaviour contracts.** These are signed by the person causing ASB and are a commitment to stop causing issues affecting others
- **Mediation.** This is an effective way of resolving disputes involving an independent and impartial third party
- the mediators. It provides a safe, structured and positive environment for parties in dispute and seeks to change behaviour, resolve conflict and prevent issues from resurfacing. Please get in touch with us for more information about mediation or visit www.progressgroup.org.uk
- **Injunction order.** We can obtain this order from the county court that can instruct someone not to do something, such as; not play excessively loud music or not to threaten violence against anyone. If a person breaches an injunction order, we can apply for contempt, and the person could receive a custodial sentence, a fine or both. The courts can, in some cases, grant a power of arrest or an exclusion area as part of the order. They can also attach positive requirements, which order the person to do something rather than not to do something, such as attending an alcohol support programme
- **Possession order.** We can apply for a possession order if the person causing the issues is a Progress Housing Group tenant. Once the court grants a possession order, this can sometimes lead to eviction. However, the courts view eviction as a last resort. They will expect the landlord to have tried, or considered, other measures before considering eviction as the most appropriate course of action. The courts can, in some cases, suspend a possession order on terms

- **Demotion order.** This alternative to possession proceedings can result in the tenant's tenancy being 'demoted' from an assured tenancy to an assured shorthold tenancy. This means they have less tenure security and rights for a fixed period.

We will also work in partnership with the police and local authorities. If appropriate, we will ask them to consider the tools and powers they have to tackle ASB, such as **closure powers**, which can result in premises associated with persistent ASB being closed to stop further ASB from being committed.

The police also have **dispersal powers**, and local authorities can issue **community protection notices (CPNs)** or delegate powers to social landlords to obtain CPNs.

If it is necessary to commence any legal action, you may need to attend court to give evidence in any legal proceedings. Your community safety officer will support you throughout this process. We will clearly explain the legal process and arrange for your transport to and from the court if your attendance is required. We can also arrange for you to visit the court before any hearing so that you can see the court's layout in advance.

Closing an ASB case

We will close your case after resolving the ASB issues affecting you.

If, upon our investigations, the issues affecting you are not considered ASB, or there needs to be more evidence to

enable us to take action we may close your case. In these circumstances, we will clearly explain why we cannot take action or what evidence is required to resolve your case satisfactorily.

We may also close your case if you have stopped reporting any further issues to us, as we need to know whether the ASB is continuing for us to consider any relevant actions to resolve matters.

When we close your case, we will send you a satisfaction survey, as we value any feedback you give us to help improve our service.

If you are unhappy about how we have handled your case, you can use our complaints procedure. Please ask for our 'Complaints and compliments' leaflet or visit www.progressgroup.org.uk/feedback

You may also be interested in

- Information on hate crime – visit our website, www.progressgroup.org.uk or contact us
- Our Key charity offers support if you or someone else is experiencing domestic abuse

Call 01772 435865, live chat with an advisor on www.keycharity.org.uk, text 07790 971237 or email clarehouse@keycharity.org.uk

Get in touch

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Progress Housing Group is the trading name of Progress Housing Association Limited.

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Report or track a repair or check your rent balance

You can pay your rent, check your rent balance and report or track a non-emergency repair online 24/7.

Log in or sign up for your online tenant account at www.progressgroup.org.uk

Complaints and compliments

Your feedback is very important to us and helps us to improve our services. If you want to tell us that we have been doing something well or are unhappy about something, please tell us using the contact details on the left.

Our Complaints Policy and process follow the standards set out in the Housing Ombudsmen's Complaint Handling Code. You can read more on our website or let us know if you would like a leaflet.

Information in another format or language

This leaflet is available in the following formats:

- EasyRead
- Audio
- Large print
- Braille
- Other languages.

More information is available at www.progressgroup.org.uk/access