

# **Anti-Social Behaviour Policy**

## 1. Policy Scope

This policy outlines Bernicia's approach to anti-social behaviour (ASB) complaints, including its definition, collaboration with partner agencies, support for complainants, and how we deal with ASB using available tools and the tenancy agreement.

The anti-social behaviour policy is in line with all relevant regulations and legislation, including:

- Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Housing Acts 1985, 1996 and 2004
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Equality Act 2010
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Safeguarding legislation including the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998

And other relevant legislation as applicable.

## 2. Policy Standards

### Standard 1: What is and is not Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is defined in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 as acting in a manner that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons.

We recognise that ASB can have a devastating impact on people's lives. We are fully committed to dealing firmly and fairly with ASB in the neighbourhoods we manage. ASB includes a wide range of behaviours that can affect the quality of life of individuals, groups or communities. Examples include:

- Violence, threats of violence or intimidation
- Harassment, hate crime and domestic abuse
- Unreasonable and excessive noise
- Vandalism, graffiti and criminal damage
- Drug dealing and other criminal activity
- Misuse of communal areas
- Dangerous or nuisance use of vehicles
- Misuse of fireworks
- Intimidating groups taking over public spaces

Not all problems between neighbours are ASB. Some issues are part of everyday living that we would not normally act on, such as:

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- Children playing and making noise during the day
- Occasional DIY or household noise at reasonable times
- Cooking smells
- Parking disputes (unless blocking access or causing safety issues)
- Lifestyle differences or minor disagreements
- Incidents of one-off noise (doors closing/items dropping/furniture being moved)

In these cases, we encourage neighbours to talk to each other to reach a solution. We can provide advice and support, including mediation services, to help resolve disputes.

## **Standard 2: Reporting, Service Delivery and Approach**

We will work with people and communities to give them the confidence and ability to enjoy a good quality of life.

A significant part of this work is to encourage people suffering from the effects of ASB to report it and to set out clear service standards so we can carry out our responsibilities and monitor how we are performing.

### **Reporting ASB**

Anyone can report anti-social behaviour by phone, online, by email, or in person at our offices.

We will stress the importance at sign up of upholding the rights and responsibilities within the tenancy agreement and explain the implications of causing ASB.

We will ensure that reporting ASB is accessible and easy, taking account of customers' needs and removing any barriers to reporting incidents. You can report ASB anonymously if you do not want to give us your name.

### **How we will respond**

We will treat every report you make about ASB as confidential. This means we will not reveal your identity without your permission, unless someone will be at risk if we do not.

We will contact you within 24 hours for severe cases and within five working days for all other cases.

We will put an officer in charge of each case and give you their contact details.

We will agree an action plan with you and monitor and review progress regularly.

We will support victims by signposting them to appropriate agencies who can provide support and assistance.

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We will review all cases at least once a month. We will usually close cases after three months if the issue has been resolved or the ASB has stopped.

## **Taking action**

We will contact the person alleged to have caused ASB in a manner that protects the safety of victims, other residents, and our colleagues and partners.

We will gather evidence using methods such as CCTV, noise recording monitors and smartphone apps where appropriate.

We will keep you updated on progress and confirm all developments and agreements in writing. We will discuss closing the case with you before we do so.

We will analyse reports of ASB to identify any patterns, then work with partners to address the issues we have found.

## **Closing cases**

We will close cases where reasonable and proportionate steps have resolved the ASB, where no further reports are being received, or where no further action can be taken. We will discuss the reasons for closing the case with victims throughout this process.

We will notify all parties in writing, including any agencies and services that have been involved in the case.

## **Standard 3: Risk Assessment and Proportionality**

We recognise that ASB can have a devastating impact on people's lives. We are fully committed to dealing firmly and fairly with ASB in the neighbourhoods we manage.

## **Our approach**

We will investigate all reports of ASB using a harm-centred approach. This means we consider both the type of ASB and the impact it is having on individuals, families and the wider community. This helps us understand the harm being caused and respond with early and proportionate action.

We will complete a risk assessment with everyone who reports ASB to understand their circumstances and any vulnerabilities. Where appropriate, we may also gather information from neighbours and partners about the wider community impact.

Based on our assessment, we may take additional steps to support victims, such as referring them or signposting to support services.

## **Balancing needs**

The needs of victims and witnesses will not be outweighed by the needs of the person causing the ASB.

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Where appropriate, we will offer support to people causing ASB to help them change their behaviour and sustain their tenancy.

## **Taking action**

We will use the full range of measures available to us to tackle ASB. This includes early intervention tools such as mediation and restorative justice where appropriate, as well as legal powers when preventative approaches have not worked and harmful behaviour continues.

We will be realistic about what we can do and will manage expectations. We will clearly explain our actions throughout the case and why certain approaches may or may not be appropriate.

## **Supporting our communities**

We will support vulnerable tenants by addressing ASB that places them at risk and identifying any safeguarding concerns. Where we believe a child or vulnerable adult is at risk, we will follow our safeguarding policy.

We recognise that not everything reported to us is ASB. In these cases, we will encourage and support people to resolve disputes amicably through communication. We will work across all tenures to help develop communities that are safe and welcoming to all and promote respectful behaviour towards the different values and lifestyles in our neighbourhoods.

We will use customer feedback to continually improve our service and work with Community Safety partners to make our communities safer.

## **Standard 4: Multi-Agency Partnership Working**

We recognize that dealing with ASB is not the sole responsibility of one agency. Multi-agency working is an important tool in taking a holistic approach to tackling ASB in our communities. Where possible we will work with other agencies to combine resources and take a partnership approach to find a suitable resolution to ASB issues.

There may be occasions when other agencies such as the Local Authority or Police have the most appropriate tools to address the problem. In these circumstances we will seek to work with them to support their action.

## **Standard 5: Data Protection and Information Sharing**

We handle sensitive personal information about ASB cases carefully and have clear procedures for when and how we share it. We normally ask for your consent before sharing your information.

However, there are times when we must share information without consent to keep people safe or prevent crime. This helps us work with partners to tackle anti-social behaviour and protect people in our communities.

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## Standard 6: Monitoring and Reviewing

We will review this policy every three years or when there is a significant change in legislation or regulation.

We will monitor the effectiveness of this policy using key performance indicators, including those related to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures for anti-social behaviour.

We will undertake satisfaction surveys with people who report on anti-social behaviour to understand their experience of the service we provide.

The Customer Services Committee receives quarterly updates on anti-social behaviour across the organisation and uses these to assess the effectiveness of this policy.

We will be transparent about our performance and publish information on our approach and outcomes in tackling ASB.

## Standard 7: Training and Awareness

We will ensure that all colleagues involved in responding to anti-social behaviour, either directly or indirectly, receive appropriate training in the application of this policy and relevant supporting procedures.

We will ensure that relevant employees are trained and equipped to respond quickly and effectively to reports of ASB and to prevent incidents escalating.

We will raise awareness among tenants about what constitutes ASB, how to report it, and what support is available. This will include information at sign-up, on our website, and through other communications.

## 3. Definitions

| Word/Phrase | Definition            |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| ASB         | Anti-Social Behaviour |
|             |                       |

**Version Number: V7.0**

**Effective From: May 2026**

**Applicable To:** This policy and its procedures apply to all members and colleagues of Bernicia Group, including Board Members, Trustees, Independent Committee Members, Directors, Involved Tenants, and colleagues whether full-time, part-time, fixed-term, casual employees, and volunteers of Bernicia, and subsidiaries of the group.

**Associated Documents:**

The following resources support the Anti-Social Behaviour policy and Bernicia colleagues to deliver a consistent and fair approach to anti-social behaviour. These can be found in the policy folder on the intranet:

- PRC-0021.1 – Anti Social Behaviour Procedure
- POL-0042 – Hate Crime and Harassment Policy
- POL-0014 – Domestic Abuse Policy
- POL-0102 – Safeguarding Adults Policy
- POL-0103 – Safeguarding Children Policy

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion:** An ED&I Assessment was completed in May 2026. Please contact the Governance team if you require a copy.

**Approved By:** Executive Director of Communities

**Policy Author:** Head of Service (Neighbourhood and Community)

**Policy Owner:** Executive Director of Communities

**Next Review:** March 2029

**Reference Number:** POL-0021

## 4. Change Control

| Version Number | Effective Date | Amendment made by                             | Version approved by               | Description of changes   |
|----------------|----------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| V7.0           | May 2026       | Head of Service (Neighbourhood and Community) | Executive Director of Communities | <i>Reflect new community safety approach. Strengthening of vulnerabilities, perpetrator support and proportionality sections</i> |

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