



ANTI - SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

It is important that you feel safe and secure in your home and on your estate, and Co-op Homes takes anti-social behaviour (ASB) very seriously.

We tackle it through a combination of prevention, detection and enforcement and where there is evidence we take all reasonable steps to resolve all cases.

Co-op Homes is part of the Richmond Housing Partnership (RHP) Group which has a specialist Anti-Social Behaviour Team and we refer all serious cases to them.

Our affiliated housing co-ops have their own ASB procedures, however most of the following also applies to them and we will work with the co-op to follow similar procedures.

What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour is anything which causes unreasonable interference with your enjoyment of your home, garden or neighbourhood, or anything that directly affects your health and safety.

This includes neighbour disputes, abusive or threatening behaviour, harassment, excessive noise, violence or the threat of violence, damage to property (e.g. vandalism and graffiti) and drug taking or dealing.

Your tenancy agreement forbids you, your family and your visitors from doing anything which causes an annoyance to other people and this includes actions in the communal areas as well as in your own home.

How do I tell Co-op Homes about anti-social behaviour?

In the first instance you can write, telephone, email or fax us.

Our contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

What happens if I report a case of anti-social behaviour?

Co-op Homes will investigate and give advice on low level cases of anti-social behaviour and we will refer medium to high level cases to the specialist ASB team at RHP.

A member of their team will contact you within two working days and pursue the investigation.

They will offer you:

- Contact details for the police or other agencies such as the Environmental Health Noise Team.
- Give you a copy of nuisance diary sheets which you can use to record events. These sheets should be returned within 5 working days for serious cases and 10 working days for less serious cases.
- A personal interview within 3-5 days.
- An action plan, worked out with you to deal with the problem.

If the team are unable to help, or can only provide limited help, they will always try to refer you to someone else who may be able to help you further.

Categories of ASB

Low level anti-social behaviour:

- Neighbour disputes which do not involve violence.
- Intermittent noise such as a loud television set.

We expect you to try to resolve these issues yourself by discussing the problem with your neighbours.

We can give you advice on how to do this and in some circumstances offer mediation.

Medium level anti-social behaviour:

- Abusive or threatening behaviour.
- Excessive noise or nuisance that directly affects the health or safety of a resident.

In these instances you will be contacted by the ASB team within two working days and your case reviewed every 10 working days. The team will give you an update on progress and resolve your case, if possible, within 20 working days. If the case is not resolved within 60 working days, it will be reclassified as high level. Your case may result in court action, although the ASB team will attempt to resolve the case before it goes to court.

High level anti-social behaviour:

- Harassment, hate behaviour and verbal abuse which is deliberately aimed at annoying or disrupting a person's peace and comfort. If this is related to race, homophobia, gender, culture or disability it is regarded as personally damaging.
- Drug taking or dealing.
- Violence or the threat of violence, which includes domestic disputes.
- Damage or threat of damage to property.

We refer high level cases immediately to the ASB team and you will be contacted within one working day. They will give you an assessment of your case within five working days and may need to apply for an ASBO or start court proceedings.

What will the ASB team do about anti-social behaviour on your estate?

The ASB team may consider some of the following:

- Speak to neighbours.
 - Issue a warning letter.
 - Improve security.
 - Arrange for mediation.
 - Refer to other agencies for help or intervention.
 - Issue Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's).
 - Issue Parental Control Agreements.
 - Organise for relevant repairs created by ASB to be carried out.
- If these informal measures fail, the team will take the following stronger actions to enforce the tenancy conditions jointly with Co-op Homes:
- **Serve a Notice to end the Tenancy** - the first stage in repossessing a property.

- **Apply for an Anti-Social Behaviours Order (ASBO)** - a court order which prohibits a person from committing specific acts of anti-social behaviour.
- **Obtain an Injunction** - a court order which either makes or prevents a person performing an act.
- **Apply for a Demoted Tenancy** - a court order against a tenant which is valid for one year and makes it easier for Co-op Homes to evict the tenant if behaviour does not improve.
- **Repossess the home** - we may proceed to court to evict a tenant.

What support will I get from Co-op Homes and RHP if I report anti-social behaviour?

The ASB team will contact you at least once every two weeks to tell you how your case is progressing and they may refer you to support services if you appear to be at risk. If it appears that you need protection this will be provided and may include an injunction against the perpetrator, police protection or an emergency transfer. In extreme cases, if you need to move out of the area, you may be referred to the National Witness Mobility Scheme which is run by the Local Government Association. You can also approach the local authority for immediate assistance and advice regarding alternative accommodation.

The team will not reveal your name to the alleged perpetrator in the initial stages of investigation, in order to avoid retaliation. If the case goes to court, action cannot proceed without your evidence but your details will not be disclosed to the perpetrator, their legal representatives or other interested parties without seeking your permission.

If legal action begins the ASB team will explain the legal process to you, introduce you to our solicitors and arrange an escort to the court if necessary.

Prevention of anti-social behaviour

Prevention is an essential part of Co-op Homes' and RHP's approach to anti-social behaviour. We run a number of initiatives that seek to neutralise and reverse the effects of anti-social behaviour and also prevent further incidents. We also support schemes run by voluntary agencies and community groups which include mediation, community development activities and the Community Safety Partnership.

What if I am accused of causing anti-social behaviour?

If this happens you may be asked to attend an interview to give your side of the story. The ASB specialist team does not assume that all complaints are valid,

and will lead an objective investigation of the case before coming to a conclusion.

Rehabilitation of perpetrators

Prevention of anti-social behaviour sometimes includes offering support to a perpetrator who is unwell in some way or who has attempted to improve their behaviour. Co-op Homes and RHP will work with statutory agencies to do this.

However, the perpetrator can only stay in their home if they improve their behaviour, thereby avoiding any enforcement action.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you are concerned about anti-social behaviour!

You can read a copy of the full policy document on our website **www.coophomes.coop** or contact us at:

Co-op Homes, The Market Building, 195, High Street, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 8LB. tel: 020 8568 4112.

email: homes@coophomes.coop.

Our opening hours are 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday.