
ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY 2009 - 2011

LEAD OFFICER

Ceri Lewis
Director of Housing Services

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1.0 Background

1.1 LYHA introduced its first Anti-Social Behaviour [ASB] Strategy in 2004 as a result of the requirement of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

1.2 Anti-social behaviour [ASB] and UK government policy

In January 2006, the government published the Respect Action Plan. This was overseen by the Respect Taskforce and provided a framework of powers and approaches to tackle ASB. In 2008, LYHA signed up to this Standard.

1.3 Regulation

The Audit Commission provides a framework of expectations of the work of LYHA in tackling ASB in the Key Line of Enquiry [no. 6] titled Tenancy and Estate Management. In this document the Commission outlines its expectation in terms of prevention, intervention, support and enforcement.

At the time of writing the Tenants Services Authority have yet to publish its service standards framework. The Association will continue to adhere to the Housing Corporation's Regulatory Code until the new framework is introduced.

1.4 Legislation

The Definition of ASB is established in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is defined as;

'conduct that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress'.

The appropriate remedy will be considered on a case by case basis, subject to legal advice.

1.5 Benchmarking

LYHA has relatively low levels of ASB cases when compared to its peer group. We will measure our performance against the current categories identified by Housemark. These measures will also be part of the performance management framework. These measures are directly linked to the Respect Standards of Housing Management.

1.6 Racial harassment and domestic violence

As with all other incidences of ASB, wherever either arises the Association will investigate and, when appropriate, take action. There is further information relating to each as we have separate policies on Racial Harassment ([link](#)) and Domestic Violence ([link](#)).

2.0 Policy statement: the Association's approach to anti-social behaviour

2.1 The Association acknowledges that ASB:

- Has become a high profile area and the eradication of it in all its forms is a priority for the Association;
- Can ruin the 'quiet enjoyment' of a home to which everyone is entitled;
- Has both an emotional and financial cost to the victims as well as the Association (for example, in staff time);
- Has a negative impact on people and neighbourhoods – possibly leading to abandoned properties and voids;
- Can lead to the decline of areas and damage whole communities,
- Can undermine the good work that the Association has carried out and our relationship with our residents.

2.2 The Association believes that residents and tenants have a right to live in peace [quiet enjoyment] in their own home enjoying an individual lifestyle but must recognise that their neighbours have the same rights.

2.3 As the causes of ASB can be varied and it can be displayed in many ways, the Association will use a mixture of prevention, intervention, enforcement and support to tackle all incidences of ASB.

2.4 All complainants will be treated equally and fairly and will receive a responsive service. This also includes the wider community as we may receive complaints from non-tenants.

3.0 Tenant obligations

3.1 The Association expects all tenants, people living with them or visitors to their property not to cause a nuisance, disturbance or be involved in activities that can be categorised as ASB.

3.2 All Association tenants sign our tenancy agreement when they move in to an Association property. The tenancy agreement outlines both the landlord and the tenants rights and responsibilities.

3.3 Breaches of tenant obligations will be dealt with accordingly and in line with the available legal remedies. Including where appropriate possession proceedings.

4.0 **Support of Complainants**

4.1 All reports of ASB will be treated seriously and investigated thoroughly. A complainant will be given the opportunity to meet or discuss the issue with Association staff at a safe, convenient location at a mutually agreed time.

4.2 The Association will investigate all complaints of ASB promptly as defined in our agreed standards. If the ASB falls under the category of Domestic Violence ([link](#)) or Racial Harassment ([link](#)) the guidelines set out in the relevant procedures will be followed.

4.3 The Association will keep complainants informed of all developments in their case. The Housing Officer will write, call or visit the complainant to give updates. Information will be relayed to the complainant by a method of their (the complainants) choosing. The Association will inform the complainant and all other parties once a case has been closed and the issue resolved, or no further action is going to be taken by the Association and the reasons why.

5.0 **Prevention of ASB**

5.1 The Association acknowledges that prevention is an essential part of our approach to ASB. Below is a list of preventative measures that we are currently engaged in that form part of a package of measures that we believe will assist in tackling ASB.

- ✓ We are **working with Leeds Mediation services** and referring appropriate cases on to them. We are looking to build up similar relationships with mediation services outside Leeds.
- ✓ We are **working in partnership with the Youth Services**. In Leeds we are consulting with young people about what provisions they would like on the estate's they live on. We support diversionary projects such as the beck clearance and community arts project at the Elmetes Estate.
- ✓ Housing Officers are working with the Local Authority and Police, **implementing Acceptable Behaviour Contracts** with residents involved In ASB.
- ✓ We are carrying out **estate walkabouts** on a regular basis to tackle ASB on the estates including graffiti and abandoned vehicles.
- ✓ We are working with Leeds City Council and other Local Authorities, **introducing Neighbourhood Wardens** in areas where this service will be beneficial to our residents.

- ✓ The Invest Working Group will ensure that LYHA demonstrates its commitment to **Community Safety** through the implementation of secure by design principles with projects.
- ✓ Working in **partnership with Stop Hate UK**, LYHA will tackle harassment of vulnerable and diverse members of the community.

6.0 Support for vulnerable tenants and rehabilitation of perpetrators

- 6.1 The Association recognises that some perpetrators of ASB may themselves be in need of support. We, as a Landlord, may not have the expertise to work directly with some of these individuals. Nonetheless we will support individuals to access other agencies that can provide more specialist support.

7.0 Effective witness support

- 7.1 LYHA acknowledges that if complainants are prepared to be witnesses we will have to seriously consider how we will support them before, during and after any court action. The safety and wellbeing of the witness or victim will be considered first before any action is taken by the Association.

8.0 Confidentiality and data protection

- 8.1 The Association acknowledges that complaints of ASB have to be handled in a sensitive, professional manner by all members of its staff. Complainants may provide information that they wish to remain confidential.
- 8.2 All Association staff members, office or site based, will respect all aspects of the Confidentiality Policy [link] but it is noted that that it may be difficult to take a complaint of ASB very far without identifying the complainant to the perpetrator.
- 8.3 Permission will be sought from the complainant before information is given to an alleged perpetrator. This should be discussed with the complainant when the ASB has been at the initial stage of referral or at the first meeting.

9.0 Resident involvement

- 9.1 The Association encourages resident involvement at every opportunity as we recognise that ASB can prosper where there is disinterest in the community. The Association will look at various ways of engaging residents and hearing their opinions.
- 9.2 Estate consultation exercises are conducted to gain an understanding of the issues affecting local communities. These methods identify local concerns and the Association looks to work with the community to bring improvements to the estate.

- 9.3 Every resident is also given the opportunity to express their views of the service they receive from the Association. A full description of this can be found in the Resident Involvement Statement [[link](#)].
- 9.4 Each tenant handing in their notice will be invited to give feedback about the standard of service they have received from the Association. This information will be used to tackle issues that may be affecting the local community and any issues of anti-social behaviour.
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AUTHOR

Richard Vandermark

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REVIEWED BY

Ceri Lewis

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