

how we deal with

Anti Social Behaviour

WULVERN

A summary of our policy and procedure



your
home
team

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This document is a summary of our policy and procedures for dealing with Anti Social Behaviour. It is published for our customers and partners. A full copy of our policies and procedures is available on request.

This summary document fulfils Wulvern's requirements under the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003.

What is Anti Social Behaviour?

Anti Social Behaviour causes disturbance, upset and misery in people's lives.

According to the Chartered Institute of Housing, Anti Social Behaviour is:

"Behaviour that unreasonably interferes with other people's rights to the use and enjoyment of their home, community and environment"

Our customers tell us that Anti Social Behaviour is all these things and more:

- Fights and arguments in the street
- Dog fouling or excessive barking
- Over grown and untidy gardens, dumped rubbish and lack of care for your home
- Theft and other crimes
- Drug and alcohol abuse and drug dealing
- Problems with car parking
- Vandalism and graffiti
- Abusive or threatening behaviour and language
- Loud or frequent noise disturbance
- Bad or thoughtless parking

What should Wulvern do?

Our customers, partners and staff have also told us that the focus for our efforts should be on preventing Anti Social Behaviour from happening in the first place.

This is in line with the requirements of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003.

In addition to taking prompt and effective action where circumstances require this, we will explore motivation and try to understand the person causing the problem. This will help us to work out how we can negotiate with them to achieve a win win situation. This is about being more sophisticated in our approach as well as using the full range of legal remedies available to us.

Your tenancy agreement

Your tenancy agreement says that everyone has the right to enjoy life in their own way providing they do not upset people living near to them. A good neighbour will tolerate and understand the different lifestyles of others.

Wulvern tenants are responsible for the behaviour of:

- Every person living in or visiting your home
- This includes children
- This includes members of your family, visitors, friends and relatives

You are responsible for them in your home, on surrounding land, in communal areas and in the neighbourhood around your home.

Your tenancy agreement says that Wulvern will take action against any of our tenants who are responsible for Anti Social Behaviour if our tenants complain to us about it.

Our aims for tackling Anti Social Behaviour

Wulvern's Anti Social Behaviour Strategy aims to:

- Demonstrate our understanding that Anti Social Behaviour can seriously damage the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities
- Explain our approach to Board Members, customers and staff and our commitment to providing safe and secure homes and neighbourhoods
- Provide staff with an overarching framework within which to work on Anti Social Behaviour issues
- Provide the basis for ongoing development work to improve our services and performance
- Link to other service reviews and cultural changes that Wulvern is undertaking at the moment or will do so in the future
- Clearly signal our commitment and determination to the wider community to tackle Anti Social Behaviour effectively
- Propose a way forward to ensure that our organisation and resources match the requirements of the service we will provide to tackle Anti Social Behaviour
- Work with our partners to maximise our effectiveness in tackling Anti Social Behaviour
- Sustain tenancies
- Set out tenant and community responsibility
- Support members of the community who may fall victim to Anti Social Behaviour due to age, infirmity, disability, race or other reason

Working with our customers

What to do if you experience Anti Social Behaviour

- Report this to your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator or Sheltered Court Co-ordinator at any Wulvern office by phone, in person, by email or in writing. You can also make anonymous reports to us.
- Keep a factual written record of what you heard, saw or experienced. Record the date, the time and any facts about what happened.
- If you witness criminal behaviour, you should report this to the Police. Dial 999 for emergencies. Ring 0845 458 0000 for other incidents, or you can contact the Police anonymously by calling Crime Stoppers on 0800 555111

What steps we will take when you report Anti Social Behaviour to us

- 1 We will give the name and contact details of the person who is dealing with your case.
- 2 We will listen to you, gather information, keep notes and remain impartial. We may refer you to other organisations if this is appropriate.
- 3 We will ask you to explain to us what has been happening. Depending on the nature of the problem, we may ask you if you have approached your neighbour yourself.
- 4 We will discuss with you the different types of action that we can take. This may range from an initial visit to mediation to legal action such as an injunction.
- 5 We will advise you about the support we can provide you with, for example, an alarm or mobile phone to contact us with.
- 6 We will let you know what action we are going to take, what we expect of you and how we will keep in touch with you.

We investigate the complaints we receive to find out:

- What is happening
- Why it is happening
- When is it happening
- Who is affected
- Where it is happening
- How they are affected

Customer involvement

We will host a regular Anti Social Behaviour forum open to all customers. The forum will shape the way we deliver our strategy, policy and procedures.

Our targets for action

We understand that a speedy and effective response to reports of Anti Social Behaviour is important and promise that we will deal with complaints in the timescales listed below.

Problem	Response time
Serious allegations (such as physical assault)	We will contact the complainant within 1 working day
Less serious allegations (such as neglected gardens)	We will contact the complainant within 5 working days
Removal of racist or abusive graffiti or dangerous rubbish (e.g. syringes)	Within 1 working day
Removal of normal graffiti or rubbish	Within 5 working days

What action can we take against Anti Social Behaviour?

We recognise that there are a significant number of remedies that are available for us to use to tackle Anti Social Behaviour. These range from simple interventions such as a home visit, to complex legal proceedings that may ultimately lead to eviction. It is important to match an appropriate remedy to the complaint and to do so in a timely fashion.

Below are the main courses of action available to us:

- Warning letters
- Rubbish and graffiti removal
- Recharge for damage or garden maintenance
- Training and advice
- Professional Mediation
- Notice Seeking Possession
- Evidence Gathering
- Professional Witnesses
- Injunctions
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- Anti Social Behaviour Orders
- Eviction
- Waiting List Exclusion
- Specialist Solicitor
- Community Wardens
- Intensive Tenancy Support
- Starter Tenancies

It is important to remember that Anti Social Behaviour cases can be very complex and involve a range of activities, events and behaviours from those that cause minor nuisance to arrestable offences.

Very often, case management will involve a combination of these remedies, used at different times, all with the aim of stopping the behaviour that is causing the problem.

What support can we provide for those experiencing Anti Social Behaviour?

- Out of hours support for customers experiencing serious Anti Social Behaviour
- Support, advice and information for those willing to come forward as witnesses in court cases about Anti Social Behaviour
- Additional support for those needing help to manage their tenancy successfully to prevent Anti Social Behaviour from happening

We recognise that we need to build trust with individuals and communities so that they will feel able to report Anti Social Behaviour to us and have confidence that we will tackle it.

We also know that some tenants need more support than others to maintain a tenancy and we will explore options for providing this support.



Working with our partners

As the largest provider of homes to rent in the Crewe and Nantwich area, we recognise that we must take the lead in tackling Anti Social Behaviour as and when it occurs in our homes, streets and neighbourhoods, because in most cases our customers come to us as a first point of call with their complaints.

However, we cannot often tackle these complaints alone and we will therefore seek to develop partnerships with other organisations that can provide information, support and assistance to us in tackling Anti Social Behaviour.

Below is a list of some of our partners who are helping us to address this issue:

- Our customers
- Cheshire Police
- Safer Communities Partnership
- The Local Authority
- Social Services
- Probation Services
- SureStart
- Community and Residents Groups
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Womens' Aid
- Local Strategic Partnership
- YMCA
- Victim Support
- Other Housing Associations
- Youth Offending Team
- Connexions

What can we do to prevent Anti Social Behaviour?

We recognise that an important part of tackling Anti Social Behaviour is to have good preventative measures in place that can reduce the number of incidents likely to occur.

We will use Starter Tenancies to effectively put new tenants on probation for 12 months, visiting new customers to make sure we stop potential problems from occurring.

We will work with our partners to provide appropriate packages of advice and support for tenants that we identify as struggling to maintain their tenancies in an appropriate fashion. This may include referrals to other agencies such as SureStart and Positive Parenting who can provide support for families with children, or the YMCA's floating support scheme for vulnerable young people.

Our improvement programme will make a significant contribution to the reduction of incidents of Anti Social Behaviour by making homes safer and more secure. Programmes of work that will help achieve this include:

- All homes fully double glazed with high security specification uPVC windows.
- 600 new more secure external doors to be fitted.
- An environmental improvement programme to improve security issues such as improved lighting, communal areas, car parking and boundaries.
- Rewiring Schemes with internal lights on timers and external floodlights.

Monitoring and review

Each month, we record and monitor:

- The number of complaints received
- The nature of the complaints
- The location of complaints
- The types of resolutions that have been most successful

This information will help us review and improve our policies and procedures.

We will regularly review the way that we deal with Anti Social Behaviour and involve staff and tenants in doing this before reporting back to The Wulvern Board.

We will continue to monitor our performance on dealing with Anti Social Behaviour and benchmark our service to ensure continuous improvement.

Links to other policies and procedures

- Racial and Harassment Policy
- Domestic Violence Policy
- Neighbour Disputes and Nuisance policy
- Equality and Diversity Strategy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Involving our Customers
- Health and Safety
- Tenancy Agreement
- Anti Social Behaviour Procedure
- Complaints Policy

All these documents work together to set out how we deal with our customers, both complainants and perpetrators, alongside the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Jargon buster

Notice of Seeking Possession

The Notice of Seeking Possession is the first step that we can take in terms of legal action that can lead up to an eviction. When we talk about regaining possession of a property, we mean evicting the tenant. Wulvern always serves Notices by hand: this means that a member of our staff must physically hand the legal Notice to the tenant or post it through their letterbox. In the case of Anti Social Behaviour, a possession claim can be made as soon as a Notice of Seeking Possession has been served up or given to the tenant. Alternatively, we can delay any further legal action to give the tenant a chance to stop behaving in an anti social way and make sure they are complying with their tenancy agreement.

Possession Proceedings

The tenancy agreement contains conditions with regard to Anti Social Behaviour. These can be enforced in the County Court by a claim for possession. The court can either:

- Adjourn the case, which means that a further date will be set to hear the case
- Make a suspended possession order, which means that the tenant has a period of time in which to put things right before we can take any further action against them. If a suspended possession order is made but the tenant breaks the conditions that are set down, we can then make an application for an eviction warrant.
- Make an outright order for possession, which means that we will carry on with eviction proceedings.
- The type of order will depend on the seriousness of the allegations and the circumstances of the tenant.

Tenants evicted for Anti Social Behaviour can be excluded from the Housing Register which means that they may not be allowed to apply for rehousing with us.

Injunctions

We can apply for injunctions to make a tenant comply with the tenancy agreement or to prevent any person from behaving in an anti social way on an estate managed by Wulvern. Injunctions can help control people's behaviour in a number of different ways:

- A power of arrest can be attached to the order where violence has either been used or threatened.
- An injunction can set out terms which mean that the person is barred from entering specified areas.
- An injunction can be obtained to control the behaviour of a former tenant who has been the subject of a possession order.
- A person who breaks the terms of an injunction will be in contempt of court and can be sent to prison.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

These have been developed as a way of dealing particularly with disruptive behaviour by younger people. An Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) is not legally binding but is designed to prevent an individual, or group, from acting anti socially, typically where they have been causing vandalism, graffiti, verbal abuse, intimidation and nuisance. ABCs are best used where an eviction is not a desirable outcome and there isn't yet enough evidence to take other kinds of legal action like an Anti Social Behaviour Order or an injunction. ABCs have proved very effective in helping young people understand why their behaviour is not appropriate and what they can do to put that right.

Anti Social Behaviour Orders

Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) have been available as a legal remedy since April 1999. They are civil orders to protect the public from behaviour that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress. An ASBO prevents a person from doing specific things or entering defined areas and is effective for a minimum of two years. With recent changes in law, housing associations are now able to apply for ASBOs themselves, but need to do so in partnership with the police and local Council.

Contact details:

Wulvern House

Electra Way
Crewe
CW1 6GW
Call 01270 506200

Wulvern Choices Crewe

Edleston Road
Crewe
Call 01270 506200

Wulvern Choices Nantwich

Beam Street
Nantwich
Call 01270 506200

Opening hours for Wulvern Head Office

Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5pm

Opening hours for Wulvern Choices Crewe

Monday 9am – 5pm
Tuesday 9am – 5pm
Wednesday 9am – 5pm
Thursday 10am – 5pm
Friday 9am – 5pm

Opening hours for Wulvern Choices Nantwich

Monday and Thursday
9.30am – 12.30pm
1.30pm – 5pm



If you would like this document in your language, on tape, in large print or in Braille, please ring us on **01270 506200** or ask at one of our offices

Arabic

لتلقى معلومات في لغتك الرجاء أطلبها منا على الرقم
01270 506200

Chinese

如欲索取閣下語言的資料，請致電
01270 506200 向我們查詢

Gujarati

આપની ભાષામાં માહિતી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, 01270 506200
નંબર પર ફોન કરીને અમને પૂછો.

Italian

Per informazioni nella vostra lingua siete pregati
di contattare il seguente no.01270 506200

Kurdish

بۆ زانیاری به زمانه که ی خۆت تکایه په یوه ئه یمان بێ بکه به
01270 506200

Polish

Po informacje w języku polskim prosimy
dzwonić pod numer 01270 506200

Portuguese

Para informação na sua linguagem, por favor
fale com nos, 01270 506200

Turkish

Kendi dilinizde bilgi almak için lütfen bize sorunuz,
01270 506200

Urdu

اچھی زبان میں مزید معلومات کیلئے براؤمر ہائی 01270 506200 پر رابطہ کریں۔



www.wulvern.org.uk



01270 506200