



Anti-Social Behaviour

Information for council tenants, leaseholders and residents of our temporary accommodation

Introduction

Anti-social behaviour can have a devastating effect on people's lives.

Incidents of anti-social behaviour can range from something that is a mild annoyance, but causing harm, to something that causes fear and insecurity. It is very often different from person to person or in different communities. It could be a one-off event or something that happens over and over again. As your landlord, we have a responsibility to deal with anti-social behaviour, so we work closely with the police and other community safety partner agencies to help people who are suffering from it. Our landlord duties and powers are different from, and in addition to, the duties and powers we have to deal with ASB in the wider community.

If you are suffering disproportionately because you are vulnerable, or because there is repeated anti-social behaviour occurring, we will treat you as a priority. Please tell us about this when you contact us.

This leaflet tells you:

- What anti-social behaviour is
- What is not classed as anti-social behaviour
- How to report it
- What happens next
 - How we handle your case
 - Who deals with it
 - How we monitor satisfaction

What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour is behaviour that causes or is likely to cause nuisance, harassment, alarm or distress to a person not of the same household.

Examples of housing-related anti-social behaviour include:

- Shouting and yelling, particularly at unsocial hours
- Allowing a dog to be dangerously out of control or bark persistently
- Vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting
- Drug use or other immoral activity such as prostitution
- Misuse of communal areas including inconsiderate or inappropriate use of vehicles

Persistent, unnecessary or excessive noise should always be reported to your Housing Officer (Tenancy) in the first instance.

What is not ASB?

ASB can be difficult to define and there are some types of behaviour that are **not** classed as ASB and will not be investigated by the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Team. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Ball games, children playing in the street or communal areas
- Young people gathering socially unless they are being intimidating
- Being unable to park outside your home
- DIY and car repairs unless they are taking place at unsocial hours (for example late at night or in the early hours)
- Civil disputes between neighbours e.g. shared driveways
- One-off complaints about noise e.g. parties

However, the examples given above may constitute a breach of tenancy or a breach of environmental health or planning legislation (noise nuisance or use of domestic premises for carrying out car repairs for example). In these cases, the Anti-social Behaviour Team may refer a complaint to the relevant teams in Housing, Environmental Health, Planning or the Police.



How can I report Anti-Social Behaviour?

You do not have to put up with anti-social behaviour. If you cannot deal with it yourself and you need to report it, you can contact us or the police. Your information will be treated confidentially and in line with the Data Protection Act. You can use any of these methods to report anti-social behaviour:

- Use the 'Report It' page on our website: www.dacorum.gov.uk/report-it
- If the person you are complaining about also lives in a DBC-owned home, you should contact your housing officer (tenancy) in the first instance.
- Call the Police non-emergency number, 101 if there is no immediate threat or your call relates to an ongoing situation.
- In an emergency, always call 999. An emergency is when:
 - A crime or serious anti-social behaviour is happening now
 - People are injured
 - People are being threatened or are in danger
 - The offender is still there or is nearby

What happens next?

If you find yourself having to make a complaint about anti-social behaviour, your housing officer will respond within three working days and arrange to discuss your complaint further. We need to know what happened, where it happened and how often it happened.

We will work with you to find solutions and will tell you who is leading on your case.

We will investigate your complaint and may contact other potential witnesses to gather as much evidence as possible. We will work with you throughout the investigation and we will only contact the perpetrators with your consent.

More serious cases will be referred to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and allocated to an officer who will maintain contact with you throughout. We can use a range of legal actions to stop the nuisance, such as injunctions. If the perpetrator is a council tenant, we may also apply for possession of their property. However, we will always try to use the lowest possible form of intervention to resolve each case.

We will inform you when we are closing your case and send you a satisfaction survey. The officer handling the case will usually tell you what action has been taken.

With the help of other council departments, and by working in partnership with the Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team in Dacorum, we will continue to make our borough a safe place to live and deal effectively with those who cause misery to others.

We have a statutory duty to inform other services about your report if there are child protection issues or adults who may be vulnerable. We will always tell you if this is necessary

For more information about our victim-centred approach to Anti-Social Behaviour, please take a look at our website: www.dacorum.gov.uk/asb