

## Antisocial behaviour: what you can expect from us

This guide explains what antisocial behaviour is, how you can report it and what we may do. It also explains how we will investigate, support people involved and close a case. It applies to Sanctuary Housing customers, including homeowners and customers in independent living. The guide also applies to Supported Living services. Where there are differences in Housing and Supported Living processes, this is made clear.

### **If anyone is in immediate danger**

Call the police or the relevant emergency service. We may also advise you to contact another organisation if urgent action is needed to protect someone's health or safety.

## What is antisocial behaviour?

Antisocial behaviour is behaviour that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress. It can also be behaviour that causes housing-related nuisance or annoyance. We look at the effect the behaviour has, or could have, on people and the wider community.

Some disagreements between neighbours are not antisocial behaviour. We will check whether another approach is more suitable, including our Good Neighbour Management process.

## How to report it

You can report antisocial behaviour by phone, using our online form, in writing, by email, through social media or in person. A household member, another person or a specialist organisation can also report it.

When we receive a report, we will:

- consider whether it should be managed as antisocial behaviour
- assess risks to customers and any vulnerabilities
- tell you who will manage the case and how to contact them
- explain when we expect to respond to questions about the case
- check whether there is already an open case about the same issue.

We will usually contact customers within one working day for higher-risk cases and five working days for other cases. This may change depending on what you report and who is available to respond.

If staff believe a situation could be putting an adult or a child at risk, they will follow the processes set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

## Urgent steps we may take

Some reports need urgent action, whatever the overall level of risk. We may:

- arrange an emergency repair to make a home safe within 24 hours after serious antisocial behaviour
- remove sexist, racist, homophobic or obscene graffiti within 24 hours of the report, while keeping photographs as evidence
- arrange suitable security measures where there is an ongoing threat
- direct you to the local authority for emergency accommodation, if the police recommend this, or consider a temporary move.

## Support and adjustments

We will consider how the situation affects everyone involved. This can include disabilities, health needs, caring responsibilities, language needs and past trauma or abuse.

We will make reasonable adjustments so people can take part fully. This may include:

- speaking or writing to you in your preferred way
- translation or Braille
- allowing someone to join you at meetings or discussions.

We may work with other services or help people contact them. These may include social services, GP or mental health services, Victim Support, the local authority, the police and Citizens Advice.

## How we investigate

We will listen to the person reporting the behaviour and treat the person accused fairly. We will keep personal information private and check someone's identity before discussing a case.

How we investigate will depend on what you report. We will normally consider:

- speaking with the person who reported it, where possible within five working days of the first report
- speaking with the person accused and any witnesses
- using diary sheets for ongoing issues
- reviewing evidence, such as photographs or noise monitoring.

If another organisation, such as the police, leads the investigation, we will write to the person who reported it. We will explain our role.

We will agree an action plan with the person who reported the behaviour and provide a copy. We will keep people updated as appropriate. We usually respond to questions about the case within five working days and no later than 10 working days.

Most cases will be reviewed every two weeks. With the agreement of the person who reported it, cases may be reviewed on a monthly basis.

## What action we may take

We aim to stop the behaviour and reduce the chance of it happening again. We will choose action that is suitable for the seriousness and circumstances of the case.

Early or informal action may include mediation, referrals for support, warnings, behaviour agreements or a referral to Environmental Health.

We will usually use formal action only if informal action has not worked, or the behaviour is serious or continues. Formal action may include possession proceedings, a civil injunction, tenancy demotion or a parenting order or parenting contract.

In Sanctuary Housing, if legal action has started, we may reject a Right to Buy or mutual exchange request from the person accused.

## The outcome

If we do not find evidence that an incident happened, we will tell the people involved that we will not take action. We may monitor the situation. If there are no further concerns, we will close the case.

If there is evidence, or the person admits the behaviour, we will explain the possible consequences to them. This may include housing action, civil action or criminal action. We will tell them the outcome and any possible next steps. We will tell the person who reported it about the outcome and, where appropriate, the action taken. We will not share private details about another person or their circumstances.

## Closing and reopening a case

Where possible, we will speak to the person who reported the behaviour before closing the case. In Sanctuary Housing, we may close it without their agreement if no further incidents are reported for four weeks after the last report. In Supported Living services, we may close cases if no further incidents are reported for six weeks after the last report. We will confirm closure in writing.

We will only reopen a closed case when the new incident is linked to the earlier report and the case closed within the previous 20 working days. Otherwise, we will open a new linked case. In Supported Living services, if a case has been closed for more than six months, it will not be reopened.

## If you disagree with a decision or our service

People who reported, witnessed or were accused of antisocial behaviour can ask us to review a decision.

You can use our complaints process if you are unhappy with our service, such as communication or delays. A person accused can also challenge informal action by speaking or writing to us.

If you think reports have not been dealt with, you may be able to ask your local authority for an antisocial behaviour case review. The local authority website explains the local rules. This was previously called the Community Trigger.

If legal action is taken, you can use the relevant court appeal process. You also have a right to appeal if we issue a Section 21 Notice Seeking Possession.

## Further information

For more information on how Sanctuary manages antisocial behaviour, including how you can report ASB using our online form, visit our antisocial behaviour page on our [website](#).

Sanctuary Supported Living customers should see the dedicated antisocial behaviour page on SSL's [website](#).