

Your Guide to Anti-Social Behaviour

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What is Anti-Social Behaviour

The term describes a wide range of unacceptable behaviours that can affect the quality of life of people living, visiting or working in Oldham, including:

- Verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation or threatening behaviour
- Hate related incidents
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Using, storing or dealing drugs
- Vandalism and property damage
- Persistent noise

What is not Anti- Social Behaviour

We will not consider behaviour which results from different lifestyles or which may not be considered unreasonable by most people as anti-social behaviour. However, if it is excessive or is having a harmful effect on a person then we may assess the matter further. Such behaviour can include:

- Household noise due to everyday living
- One off parties
- Cooking odours or smells
- Children playing
- People being rude or disagreeable
- Car parking disputes
- Minor disagreements between neighbours
- DIY in reasonable hours

How can I sort out a problem?

If it's safe and you feel comfortable, speak to your neighbour to try to resolve matters. This can sometimes be the best way to sort out issues and it can stop things getting worse. Your neighbour may not realise there is a problem and may be happy to change their behaviour.

Your Responsibilities

We want you to be proud of the area where you live. We need you to play your part in this too. We expect you to:

- Keep to your tenancy conditions and in particular be considerate towards your neighbours
- Be responsible for family members and visitors and be accountable for their behaviour
- Take responsibility for solving minor disagreements and show consideration for different lifestyles
- Treat all our employees, contractors and anyone working in our communities with respect.

Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour

Contacting Us

We encourage a wide range of ways for reporting incidents including:

- Our website - www.fcho.co.uk
- Telephone - 0161 393 7117
- Email or letter
- In person at our office – First Place, 22 Union Street, Oldham OL1 1BE
- Through a third party - Councillor, family member and partner agency
- Reports can be made anonymously however this may restrict the action we can take

We may ask you to complete a written diary of incidents using our online diary form and to record noise using the “NoiseApp.” If you don’t have access to the internet we can give you a supply of diary forms you can complete.

We will make regular contact with you. Information given to us will be treated confidentially and will only be shared with your consent, in line with our legal responsibilities or clear instructions from the Courts to disclose such information. If there are safeguarding concerns about vulnerable adults and/or children we will share information with other agencies.

Criminal Activity

If the incident involves a crime you should report it to the police and make a note of the crime reference number. In an emergency you should dial 999, for non-emergencies dial 101 or report online at www.gmp.police.uk.

What happens when I’ve reported Anti-Social Behaviour?

We will ask you a few questions about what happened, when and where it happened and who was involved so we can get an understanding as to whether we can help you and how quickly we can do that.

How we manage reported incidents

Some incidents may not require the opening of a formal case.

If we can help you and the incident involves violence, threats of violence or hate crime we will give it a Category 1 status and agree an action plan with you within 1 working day.

Other incidents such as noise, abuse and damage may be given a Category 2 status and we will agree an action plan with you within 3 working days.

The action plan will include what you can do, if we can take action - what we will do, how quickly we will do it and how often we will contact you.

What can you do to support me?

If you are having difficulty coping or you have been the victim of a specific type of incident such as domestic violence and abuse we can put you in touch with services that can help.

Will you contact the people responsible?

We may talk to the people you think are responsible and ask them to explain their behaviour.

If you don't want them to know who reported the matter we will tell them you want to remain anonymous. But, if we do that it will probably limit the action we can take and could result in the suspension or closing of a matter.

Will you contact anyone else?

If you tell us about other people who witnessed the incident we may contact them to find out more about what happened. We can also contact other organisations such as the police that may have relevant information.

What will we do about the Anti-Social Behaviour?

This depends on the type of anti-social behaviour.

We may explore ways that neighbours can mend their relationship and forgive and forget.

We can meet people face-to-face and send out warning letters to remind them of their responsibilities, or what may happen if they agree to change their behaviour and then don't.

We can ask the other party to sign an Acceptable Behaviour Contract so they know what is expected of them in the future, and they agree to abide by the contract.

We can issue a Community Protection Warning which will set out the behaviour complained of, our expectations and the consequences of failing to change behaviour.

We may consider obtaining an Injunction, which is a Court Order compelling someone to do something or stopping them from doing something. Breach of the Court Order can result in a fine or imprisonment.

We may consider asking a Court to give us Possession of a property that we rent out, however this can be a lengthy process.

We work with communities and partner agencies such as the Police and Environmental Health to find solutions and resolve problems.

Legal Action

We will pursue legal action in cases where serious and/or criminal action has occurred and the evidence is sufficient to substantiate it; we may take legal action without first considering early intervention.

We may pursue legal action where early intervention has failed to stop or prevent persistent anti-social behaviour.

Decisions to pursue legal action will always be determined by the impact the behaviour has on victims and communities, evidence available, proportionality, reasonableness and the likelihood of a successful outcome.

What happens if a case goes to Court?

If we take legal action and you are a witness you may be expected to attend at Court to give evidence and answer questions about what happened. If that happens we will tell you what is expected of you and explain the process.

Support at Court

Our staff are trained and experienced. They will work to ensure you are supported on the day and that processes and decisions are explained to you.

We can help with travel expenses and mobility requirements. We will explain outcomes to you and answer your questions.

If we still need your support to enforce or monitor a Court Order we will let you know what is expected.

Will you tell me before you close the case?

We aim to proactively manage cases to achieve closure of the less serious anti-social behaviour cases within 8 weeks. We will close cases in the following circumstances:

- You and the other party have resolved the matter between you
- Action has been taken and the anti-social behaviour has been resolved
- There is no evidence to support action
- Another agency is dealing with the issue and there is no action for FCHO
- Complainant fails to provide evidence and/or support action

We will normally tell you about the conclusions we have reached and the reasons why we are closing the case.



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