

THREE BOROUGHES HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE

Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

1. Introduction

This policy outlines Three Boroughs Housing Co-operative's approach to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). The Co-operative recognises how disruptive ASB can be on individuals and neighbourhoods and this policy sets out the specific actions the Co-operative will take and the support we will give to Members when ASB is reported. The Co-operative's ASB Procedure details the steps the Co-operative will take to tackle ASB issues.

2. Definition of Anti-social behaviour

The Co-operative will adopt the widely used definition of ASB outlined in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014:

- Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person;
- Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises;
- Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

However, the Co-operative recognises this is a limited definition, describing the consequences of the behaviour and not the behaviour itself, and acknowledges it is often difficult to determine what constitutes ASB as this depends on an individual's perception and can encompass a wide range of behaviours.

For the purpose of our ASB Policy, both domestic abuse and harassment on the grounds of a protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) will also be considered as a form of ASB.

3. Objectives of the Policy

- To ensure reports of ASB are dealt with promptly and in a sensitive, fair and efficient manner.
- To prevent and tackle ASB but with an underlying aim of sustaining tenancies.
- To take proportionate action based on the amount of harm caused, adopting a victim centred approach.
- To work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle ASB.

4. Legislation

The following legislation is relevant to this policy:

- Anti-social behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- Housing Acts 1985, 1988 and 1996

5. Examples of Anti-social behavior

Not all behaviour that is reported will necessarily be considered ASB. The table below provides guidance on what we broadly consider to be examples of ASB and those we do not. These lists are not exhaustive and the action we take will be based on the circumstances of each case.

Examples of ASB	Examples of behaviour we do not normally consider anti-social
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive noise, including music, persistent arguments, slamming doors • Using or threatening to use violence • Domestic abuse • Abusive behaviour or abuse of staff or contractors • Criminal activity • Offensive drunkenness • Theft or damage to property • Littering, inappropriate disposal of rubbish, fly tipping • Pets not kept under control • Compromising the security of buildings (e.g. by propping communal doors open) • Vehicle nuisance (e.g. abandoned cars, inconsiderate parking) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children playing (unless at unsocial hours) • Babies crying • Normal household sounds (e.g. cleaning, footsteps, doors closing) • Noise transference due to poor sound insulation • Clashes due to different work and life patterns • Smoke and cooking smells • Private one-off party/BBQ (having informed neighbours in advance) • DIY (unless at unsocial hours) • Instrumental music practice during acceptable hours

We recognise that normal behaviour may be classed as anti-social if it takes place at unsocial hours.

If the behaviour does not qualify as ASB, it may be dealt with under the Resident Dispute Policy.

6. What we expect from Members

- To abide by the terms of your tenancy agreement or licence. The terms will be explained to all new Members when moving into their property.
- To work in partnership with the Co-operative to resolve ASB issues.
- To tolerate and show understanding towards the different lifestyles of others.
- To resolve minor disputes with neighbours and be open to the use of mediation to resolve such disputes (see Co-operative's Resident Dispute Policy).
- To be responsible for the behaviour of people living in or visiting your home.
- To not harass, insult, abuse or attack anyone connected with the Co-operative.
- To not use, or permit the use of, your home or communal areas for any illegal activity.

7. Shared Housing

The Co-operative recognises that resident disputes and anti-social behaviour can take place in its shared housing which can have a very negative impact on the household members involved. All Members in shared housing are expected to abide by the 'Shared House Guidelines'.

The expectation is for household members to resolve any disputes which may arise from shared living amongst themselves through discussion and compromise. However, any reports of ASB from a Member living in shared housing against another household member will be dealt with under this policy.

8. Reporting ASB Issues

The Co-operative will accept reports of ASB by telephone, in writing, by email or in person.

Any member experiencing violence or the threat of violence, should report the matter to the police in the first instance.

The Co-operative does not have the capacity to immediately respond to disturbances, such as loud parties, taking place at night. These will be dealt with by the local Council's Environmental Health team.

9. The Co-operative's Approach to Reports of ASB

9.1 General Approach

The Co-operative aims to take a proactive approach to reports of ASB, but Members must be aware that action can only be taken if there is sufficient evidence and the behaviour meets the definition of ASB as laid out in this policy. If the behaviour is deemed to be a dispute between neighbours, this will be dealt with under the Resident Dispute Policy.

The circumstances of the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will always be considered before deciding on an appropriate course of action. Any action taken will be proportionate to the seriousness, impact and frequency of the behaviour, the level of risk it poses to those affected and the evidence available to support the case. If there is an ongoing police investigation, the Co-operative may wait to see the outcome of this before taking further action. Please refer to the Co-operative's ASB Procedure for details of how ASB issues will be addressed.

9.2 Confidentiality

All reports of ASB will be treated in the strictest confidence and the names of individuals (complainants and alleged perpetrators) will only be disclosed to those responsible for investigating the complaint, and no other person, without the appropriate consent. All records and information will be stored securely, in line with the Co-operative's Data Protection Policy.

9.3 Partnership Working

The Co-operative will work in partnership with other agencies, including the police, local authorities, mediation services and other support agencies to ensure that cases of ASB are dealt with in the most effective manner.

9.4 Support for Members

If a report of ASB is received, Members will be signposted to sources of support. If it is known that a complainant or alleged perpetrator of ASB is vulnerable (for example, because of their age, mental health or a disability), additional support may be sought, or a referral made, to external agencies.

10. Use of evidence

The following sources of evidence may be used to monitor and resolve ASB issues:

- Diary sheets – Members should be asked to complete diary sheets so that precise details of the behaviour can be recorded
- Video, sound recordings or photographs (complainants will be provided with advice in respect of what is permissible in this respect)
- CCTV footage and information from partner agencies
- Witness statements

Where necessary, further information may be sought from other relevant agencies, such as the police.

11. Unresolved issues / unhappy residents

It must be understood that it may not always be possible to take any formal enforcement action if there is a lack of sufficient and appropriate evidence. However, if a Member feels the Co-operative has not addressed the issue to their satisfaction, the Member can:

- Make a formal complaint using the Co-operative's Service Complaints Policy
- Contact the local authority to request a 'Community Trigger'. This allows a local authority to carry out a case review and make any recommendations for the Co-operative or partner agencies to help resolve the issue. A Community Trigger can only be requested if three separate incidents have been reported to the police, the Co-operative or the local authority within a six-month period.

12. Training

Training will be made available to all employees and Members to support those affected by ASB and to ensure ASB cases are handled effectively.

13. Monitoring and Reporting

Accurate records will be kept of all reported incidents and action taken to ensure cases can be monitored effectively. All information will be stored safely and securely in line with the Co-operative's Data Protection Policy and will only be shared with other organisations when required by law or with the consent of those involved.

The Management Committee will be made aware of any significant cases of ASB, including all cases of harassment and domestic abuse. A report will be presented to the Annual General Meeting detailing the number and type of ASB cases reported. All information will be presented in an anonymous format.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects best practice and to address legislative, regulatory or operational changes.

Approved by the Management Committee on	9th March 2022
Signed	
Position of Signatory	
For review on	9th March 2025