

Local Offer – Responding to Anti-Social Behaviour

This local offer has been devised and developed in partnership with residents at specially convened focus groups, and consulted on widely at the 2010 Residents Day.

If you are affected by anti-social behaviour, these are the standards of service you can expect from Hexagon.

In general

- If you telephone us to report a complaint of anti-social behaviour our Customer Services staff, your Housing Officer or the Duty Housing Officer will take details from you straightaway.
- All complaints which we receive will be logged on our computer database.
- We will acknowledge ALL complaints, in writing, even if no action is taken.
- We will produce and keep up to date an anti-social behaviour 'Information Pack'. This will contain clear information about the service you can expect from Hexagon, as long as general information about remedies to anti-social behaviour, and will be sent to all complainants.

When we do not think any action by Hexagon is necessary

We will take all complaints of anti-social behaviour seriously, but there are occasions when we do not consider it useful or appropriate for Hexagon to get involved. This includes

- When the person making the complaint has made no attempt to deal with the matter themselves, by speaking to the person causing the problem, for example.
- When the behaviour being complained of would not be considered to be anti-social behaviour by most reasonable people.
- When an incident is of a minor nature, a one-off, and unlikely to be repeated.
- When no breach of tenancy has occurred.

Under these circumstances, we will explain why we do not intend to take any action, and we will send you our Information Pack. We will keep a log of your complaint, in case it is needed in future

When you do not want us to take any action

If you ask us not to, we will not take any action on receipt of a complaint. We will

- Record the details in case they are needed in future, and we will write to you within 5 days to confirm that you have reported an incident of anti-social behaviour.

When a one-off action is all that is needed

Some complaints can be dealt with by a one-off action – usually a letter - and without the need for any further investigation or interviewing of the parties concerned. Examples of this could be a noisy party from a household that does not normally cause any problems, or a general problem with residents misusing a refuse area.

Under these circumstances, we will

- Confirm by letter, within 5 days of your initial report, that you have reported anti-social behaviour to us, summarise your complaint and the action which we have agreed to take. We will also send you our Anti-social Behaviour Information Pack.
- We will take the one-off action, and then monitor the situation. This will include contacting you again within the following 28 days to see if the situation has improved.

Any one-off action letters will be worded carefully and will give the person being complained about the opportunity to discuss the matter if they dispute the allegation against them.

Unfortunately, although we might hope that a situation can be dealt with by a one-off action, the anti-social behaviour might continue. If it does, we will take further action as set out below.

When the anti-social behaviour requires further action

Most cases do require further investigation before we can properly decide on a course of action. In these cases we will

- Confirm by letter that you have reported anti-social behaviour to us and summarise your complaint and the initial action which we have agreed to take within 5 days of your initial report.
- If necessary, we will visit you at home to take full details within 5 working days (sooner if the matter is urgent)
- We will not disclose your identity to the person you are complaining about without your agreement.
- If you agree to our approaching the other person about your complaint, we will write to them within 5 days of our meeting with you, to make them aware that a complaint has been made the nature of the complaint, and ask to meet with them to discuss it. If the matter is more urgent, we will arrange to visit the alleged perpetrator within 2 days and, if less urgent, within 10 days.
- If there were witnesses to the anti-social behaviour we will arrange to meet with them and take statements.
- Once we have gathered information from all the parties we will agree an action plan and discuss this with you. We will aim to confirm the action plan in writing to you and the other party within 15 days of your original complaint.
- We will supply you with Diary Sheets if the anti-social behaviour is ongoing and if appropriate.
- We will contact other agencies who may have information regarding your complaint or may be able to help e.g. local authority Noise Teams, multi-agency anti-social behaviour forums, police.
- If your complaint is about the tenant of another landlord we will notify the other landlord of your complaint and work in partnership with them to try to resolve the problem
- Where appropriate we will make a referral to a mediation service to facilitate an agreement between you and the other party. We will seek your agreement first.

Community Problems – communication and information

Where anti-social behaviour is affecting a group of residents – everyone in a block of flats for example – we will try to make sure that all residents are kept informed of our investigations and our work to tackle the problem. We will do this by the most appropriate method, which could include

- Using the block or estate notice board to post up to date information
- Sending group letters/emails/texts to all residents
- Organising residents meetings

Legal proceedings

- We will consider legal action when all other methods of resolving the situation have failed and where there is sufficient evidence to support such action. We will consider the full range of legal remedies available to us and choose the remedy which we consider most likely to ensure that the anti-social behaviour ceases.
- We will discuss any proposed legal action with you and get your agreement.

Witness Support

We have a separate set of Service Standards that set out how we will support witnesses.

Monitoring and Review

- We will keep a record of the anti-social behaviour and the action taken on our computer database.
- Where we take one-off action, we will monitor the situation for one month before closing the case.
- We will contact you at least once a month while a case is ongoing.
- Once we have agreed an action plan we will monitor it every month to ensure that it is progressed.
- If there are no reports of further incidents for three months (one month for minor or one-off incidents), we will contact you before closing the case.

Feedback

- We will telephone you for your feedback once the case has been resolved, or closed, or after 2 months (if the matter is ongoing).
- We will use feedback which we receive from residents to enhance the service we provide.

If we receive a complaint about you

- We will write to you within 3 days of receiving the complaint to let you know what it is about.
- If the complaint is straightforward we will give you an opportunity to remedy the problem. If you do, we will take no further action.
- If the complaint is more serious we will make an appointment to meet with you within 10 days to discuss the allegation.
- We will notify you of our action plan within 5 days of the completion of our investigation.
- If we feel that you and the other party could resolve the issues by mediation, we will refer you to a Mediation Service. We will get your consent before doing this
- We will ensure that you are offered appropriate support if we identify with you that you have support needs which are not currently being met and which may be contributing to the anti-social behaviour.
- Before starting any legal proceedings we will consider whether there are any implications under the Disability Discrimination Acts.

- If a legal remedy is considered necessary we will consider the full range of legal options open to us and choose the one most likely to ensure that you desist from the anti-social behaviour.

Analysis of data

- We will analyse statistics from our computer database on the types and locations of complaints annually to ensure that we identify any 'hotspots' and focus our resources on these areas.
- We will report these statistics to our Board of Management.

Complaints about our service to you

If you do not think we have met our standards, or have any other complaint about the service, we want to know. Further details of how to complain are available in the Anti-Social Behaviour Information Pack, on our website or from the Customer Services Centre .

Service commitment	How we measure the commitment
100% of complaints of anti-social behaviour recorded and confirmed to complainant, even if no further action taken	We measure date based actions (such as how quickly we sent out a letter) using our computer systems. We will contact everyone who reports anti-social behaviour to us, to check how satisfied they were with the service they received
Where a 'one-off' action is taken, we will let the complainant know the action we have taken, and check with them within 28 days to see if the situation has been resolved.	
We aim to have carried out an initial investigation and discussed an action plan with the complainant within 15 working days in 80% of cases.	
We will contact the complainant at least once a month while a case is ongoing.	
We will contact the complainant before closing the case	

Reporting our Performance

We will report once a year to the Performance Review Group of residents on the measures above with facts and figures, such as the number of new cases reported, and types of anti-social behaviour reported. A summary will be included in the Annual Report to Tenants.

If you would like any more information about Hexagon's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour, please contact our customer service centre, or visit our website.