



Accent

Anti-social Behaviour & Hate Crime Policy

Anti-social Behaviour & Hate Crime Policy

Document Owner: Robert Bloom, Director of Housing Services

Author: Gavin Houghton, Head of Housing Services

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1.2	Robert Bloom – copy to CEC	27/11/25	27/11/28	Clarification of raised and standard risk	Gavin Houghton

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to ensure Accent Housing has fair, transparent and consistent standards in relation to anti-social behaviour and hate crime. It aims to be comprehensive, clear and accessible to all customers. It enables customers to understand how Accent deal with reports of anti-social behaviour and hate crime, and the standard of behaviour expected of customers, their households and any visitors to their home.

We encourage our partners to access this policy to inform their actions and strategies as part of a joined-up approach to tackling anti-social behaviour and hate crime.

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1. Introduction

Preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour and hate crime is a priority for Accent Housing. Left unchallenged, we recognise that anti-social behaviour can have a significant and detrimental impact on people's lives and communities.

We have adopted a victim centered approach to the way we manage anti-social behaviour and hate crime, the impact of individuals and groups impacted by, and/or reporting events is taken into account.

Readers should note that our approach to dealing with cases of domestic abuse is dealt with in line with our Domestic Abuse related policies and procedures.

We have a statutory obligation to ensure that policies and procedures comply with the following legislation (not an exhaustive list):

- The Housing Act 1985, 1988, 1996, 2004
- Public Order Act 1986
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 & Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993
- Protection From Harassment Act 1997
- The Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Criminal Justice Act 2003
- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Racial and religious Hatred Act 2006
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- General Data Protection Regulation as supplemented and varied by the Data Protection Act 2018
- Regulator Of Social Housing – Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Group Act 2006

2. Scope

This policy sets out how we aim to prevent anti-social behaviour and hate crime or, intervene promptly when it does occur and take action against persistent perpetrators. This policy provides customers, colleagues and partners guidance on how we deal with complaints of anti-social behaviour from or in relation to Accent customers, people living with them or visitors to their home.

We recognise that anti-social behaviour and hate crime is often tackled in partnership with others, such as the relevant Local Authority and Police, and any other relevant local partners.

We are committed to ensuring our customers and wider communities can enjoy peace, quiet and security where they live.

3. Definitions

Antisocial Behaviour

There is no single definition of what is meant by the term anti-social behaviour.

The Anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 defines anti-social behaviour as:

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

For the purpose of our duties under the 1996 Housing Act (s.218A), anti-social behaviour is any conduct which:

- is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to anyone who has a right to live in a property managed by us, those living in any other property in the neighbourhood including tenants of other landlords and owner occupiers, and anyone else lawfully in such property or in the locality, for example working or using local facilities; and
- directly or indirectly relates to or affects the housing management functions of Accent Group "Indirect" examples include housing support and social care, environmental health, refuse collection and other services provided that may help us to deliver our landlord function efficiently; or
- consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation managed by us for an unlawful purpose.

Hate crimes and hate incidents

A hate crime, or hate incident, is any incident that is perceived, by the victim or any other involved person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person based on their actual or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity. In addition, some local authorities, police forces and other organisations also consider crimes or incidents that are perceived to be motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person based on other actual or perceived differences to be hate crimes / incidents.

Hate crimes can include:

- Threatening behaviour
- Assault
- Robbery
- Damage to property
- Inciting others to commit hate crimes, and harassment.

Where the term 'hate crime' or 'hate crime and harassment' is used throughout this policy, this is used to cover both hate crimes and hate related incidents.

Types of anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour can range from nuisance behaviour to serious or criminal activity. Anti-social behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Persistent noise nuisance, such as regular parties, or loud music being played between 11pm and 7am
- Verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation and/or threatening behaviour
- Hate related incidents
- Vandalism and damage to property
- Drugs misuse and or drug dealing (including cultivation, manufacture, supply and use of drugs and other substance misuse)
- Alcohol-related incidents
- Physical violence, including threats of violence
- Littering and rubbish
- Misuse of communal areas/public spaces/loitering
- Using your home for immoral purposes
- Any other criminal behaviour not included in the categories above, for example arson.

Behaviour that we wouldn't normally classify as anti-social behaviour:

Behaviour that results from different lifestyles or which would not be considered unreasonable is not anti-social behaviour. Examples include:

- Household noise due to everyday living (such as babies crying, doors closing, toilets flushing, vacuuming, use of washing machine or other general household noise)
- children playing
- Ball Games
- Isolated / nor regular parties, barbecues, or celebrations between 7am and 11pm
- Cooking smells
- DIY or building works at reasonable times(between 7am and 11pm).
- Someone parked lawfully

In these circumstances we would ask all involved parties to speak to relevant neighbours or involved parties where appropriate, or voluntarily take part in mediation

services. If customers decide they do not wish to take part in mediation, we may not be able to intervene, and customers will be advised of their options to seek resolution themselves.

4. References

Links to other Policies and Procedures. Accent Policies and Procedures can be found in the Corporate Library.

- Anti-social Behaviour and Hate Crime Procedure
- Anti-social Behaviour and Hate Crime staff guidance
- Safeguarding Policy
- Allocations and Lettings Policy and Procedure
- Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Tenancy Policy
- Tenancy Management Policy
- Customer Income and Arrears Policy
- Good Neighbourhood Management Policy and Procedure
- Record Management and Retention Policy
- Warning Messages Guidance
- Vulnerability Information Guidance
- Starter Tenancy Procedure

5. Requirements

Receiving and handling reports of anti-social behaviour

We will ensure that everyone can access our service through all our communication channels.

A report of anti-social behaviour can be made in the following ways:

- By telephone
- In-person
- In writing
- By e-mail
- Via our website
- Through a third party e.g. local Councillor, Community Protection
- Text message
- The Noise App

All reports made through our Housing Hub will be acknowledged within 1 working day.

On receipt of the initial incident report, we will complete an initial report and assessment of the reported incident.

A risk assessment will be used to assess the incident and determine the appropriate response timescales, these will be either a **'raised'** or **'standard'** risk.

Raised Risk: 24 hours or one working day – a score of 20+

Standard Risk: 5 working days - a score of under 20. Following receipt of the initial report and assessment we will interview the victim and agree an action plan.

Where the **alleged perpetrator** has been identified, they will be interviewed, if appropriate and in agreement with the victim within 5 working days

We will arrange for the removal of offensive graffiti on Accent property within 48 hours of the report being received.

Supporting victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour and Hate Crime

We are committed to supporting witnesses and victims of anti-social behaviour and hate crime. Whether a person is a victim, or whether they are prepared to act as a witness, we recognise the importance for customers to be provided with as much support as possible.

We will therefore ensure any support needs identified are met directly by us or through liaison with other agencies, such as victim support agencies, or any agencies currently working with the victim and/or witness.

We will maintain regular contact with victims and witnesses, ensuring they feel supported, valued and empowered.

We understand that our customers may have strong connections with their neighbourhood and community and may have invested in their home. Rather than relocate victims, our priority is to deal with perpetrators. However, in the most serious and potentially threatening situations, and where it has been assessed as appropriate, we will consider rehousing victims temporarily or permanently.

Preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour

Prevention

The tenancy agreement or lease places an obligation on customers to act reasonably and have consideration for neighbours. It informs that we will take action to deal with those causing anti-social behaviour. Relevant Accent colleagues will make new and existing customers aware of their obligations at the earliest opportunity.

Early intervention

We believe that early intervention of incidents of ASB will often prevent it from continuing or escalating. We recognise that effective early intervention provides relief and support for the victim/s. We will intervene at the earliest opportunity to provide victims and communities relief from further antisocial behaviour.

Enforcement

In cases of serious or persistent anti-social behaviour, or where offers of support have been refused and behaviour has not improved, we will work with our partners, such as the Police and Local Authority to consider appropriate enforcement action to protect the welfare of victims and the wider community.

Multi-agency partnership working

Dealing with anti-social behaviour and hate crime can be complicated, and has many causes and effects. As such, it cannot be tackled by a single agency acting alone. For this reason, we work closely in partnership with other agencies.

We are members of established partnership arrangements within the areas we operate to tackle anti-social behaviour and hate crime. We work with Local Authorities, the Police and other agencies and use problem-solving methods for identifying high incident areas, preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour and hate crime and supporting victims and witnesses.

We are committed to continue regular information sharing, joint action planning and joint working between officers from different agencies at both a strategic and operational level.

We have supported and will continue to support community safety initiatives.

Statutory Nuisance

Where appropriate, we work with statutory partners including the relevant Local Authority and Police to take all reasonable steps to investigate a complaint of statutory nuisance, examples of which include:

- Persistent noise nuisance
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Litter / dumped rubbish
- Abandoned vehicles

Dealing with perpetrators

We recognise the need to contribute where we can to the rehabilitation of perpetrators and in tackling the root causes of anti-social behaviour and hate crime. We will continue to provide perpetrators with the opportunity to exhibit a change in their behaviour, even where legal action has commenced or concluded.

Perpetrators will be given an opportunity to present their response at each stage of enforcement action. We will inform them of any right to a formal review of a decision to take enforcement action.

Vulnerable Perpetrators

We will always consider issues of vulnerability, for example, disability, physical and mental health conditions or drug and alcohol use. In such cases, we will apply the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and / or other relevant legislation as well as work with relevant agencies to ensure they have appropriate support, where applicable and available.

Juvenile perpetrators

We recognise young people who cause anti-social behaviour may have complex support needs. We will seek to provide support and intervention in liaison through Children's Services, Priority Families, Family Intervention Project (where available) and Youth Offending Services.

Disputes involving owner-occupiers and tenants of private landlords

We will work with the relevant Local Authority, the Police and other agencies to investigate and consider actions to be taken on complaints received from our customers against owner-occupiers and tenants of private landlords.

If the complaint is received from an owner-occupier or tenant of private landlords regarding one of our customers we will investigate the complaint and take appropriate action in accordance with this Policy.

Anti-social Behaviour Case Review

An Anti-social Behaviour Case Review (ABCR), this is a tool which enables victims of anti-social behaviour to request a multiagency case review where their report meets a certain threshold.

The Home Office defines an Anti-social Behaviour Case Review as;

'A process where victims of persistent anti-social behaviour can request a multi-agency review if a local threshold is met. This review aims to problem solve ongoing anti-social behaviour by sharing information and utilizing the expertise of partner agencies to identify a resolution road. The Anti-social Behaviour Case Review is not an alternative complaints procedure and does not apportion blame, but rather focuses on problem solving the case and ensuring the victim's voice is heard.'

The victim, or another person acting on their behalf, such as a family member, MP or councillor, can request a case review by contacting the relevant Local Authority in which they live.

We are committed to working with partners to undertake multi-agency case reviews where the community trigger is activated.

Information sharing

An information sharing agreement exists between us and relevant statutory partners. This sets out the procedure for the sharing of information regarding anti-social behaviour. All information shared will comply with the information sharing agreement and relevant legislation and guidance.

We will share information at Police tasking meetings and case conferences to reduce crime and disorder in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Section 115.

In addition to sharing information to resolve ASB and hate crime, we will also share appropriate information with statutory agencies where we have reason to believe that there are safeguarding concerns, or where someone may be at risk.

6. Exceptions

There may be certain circumstances under which the terms of this policy may be reconsidered. Colleagues should be mindful of customer vulnerabilities and their specific needs. Extenuating circumstances will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and exceptions may be applied that require empathy and flexibility, to ensure that customers are treated fairly, compassionately and with respect.