

INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS

9. Tackling anti-social behaviour and harassment

We expect all our residents to show consideration towards other people.

This booklet gives a summary of our policy and procedure on anti-social behaviour and harassment. It explains what we expect of you and what we can do to sort out problems of anti-social behaviour and harassment.

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- Anti-social behaviour page 2
- Avoiding anti-social behaviour page 3
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Anti-social behaviour

Whenever we receive a report of anti-social behaviour, we will respond quickly and treat all reports seriously. We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour and we will make every effort to prevent it by using a range of measures (see below) and by working closely with local agencies (for example, the police) and local communities. Our Neighbourhood Liaison Team deals with anti-social behaviour.

Measures	Our approach
Preventing anti-social behaviour	We will prevent anti-social behaviour from getting worse by dealing with problems quickly and offering appropriate advice.
Management information	When anti-social behaviour is reported to us, we will act quickly and take action to tackle it by using a number of measures (for example, face-to-face interview or independent mediation between those involved).
Legal action	If the anti-social behaviour does not stop, we will take legal action. We prefer to use injunctions (court orders) because we can get them quickly and so take action to stop the behaviour. We will also use a range of other measures that we will mention later in this section.

What is anti-social behaviour?

We use the definition given in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, which says that anti-social behaviour is “conduct which is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person, and which relates to or affects how we manage our homes”.

Avoiding anti-social behaviour

Noise

Noise is one of the most common forms of anti-social behaviour. If you can hear your neighbours, they can probably hear you too, so please be a considerate neighbour.

- Avoid doing any noisy housework such as vacuuming, DIY or using the washing machine late at night.
- Don't play your TV, radio, hi-fi or musical instrument too loudly. If you can hear it outside your own front door, it's too loud.
- Keep TVs, radios and hi-fi speakers away from partition walls.
- Avoid banging your doors shut.

Family, friends and visitors

You are responsible for the behaviour of your family, friends and visitors. If they cause anti-social behaviour in or around the property, we will hold you responsible.

Pets

You must keep your dogs and any other pets under proper control and make sure that they do not cause a nuisance. If someone else's pets are causing a nuisance, you could contact the following people for help.

- The council dog warden can deal with stray dogs and dog mess.
- The police need to know about any dangerous dogs in the area.
- The environmental health department of your local council can take action where animals are causing a noise nuisance or dog mess is a threat to health.
- The RSPCA can take action if an animal is being neglected or cruelly treated.

Other examples of anti-social behaviour

Other types of behaviour that we consider to be anti-social are mentioned in the 'Looking after your neighbourhood' booklet in this handbook.

These include:

- storing your belongings in the shared areas;
- dumping rubbish in outside shared areas;
- not keeping your garden and home tidy and in good condition;
- abandoned vehicles;
- vandalism and graffiti; and
- running a business from your home.

What can I do about anti-social behaviour?

- If appropriate, you should speak to the person who is causing the problem as they may not realise that they are disturbing you.
- You can contact the environmental health department of your local council who may investigate and take action. The types of nuisance they can deal with are:
 - noise;
 - dust and dirt (for example, from DIY and other household jobs);
 - rubbish and fly-tipping;
 - the smell from pets or the mess they leave; and
 - the build-up of rotting matter.
- Most councils have a team who deal with noise nuisance and will take action against people who continually cause a noise nuisance. There are details at the back of this handbook about who you can call to report noise nuisance.

- Keep a record of the nuisance you are experiencing, including the type of nuisance, the dates and times it happened and the effect it has on you. We can give you diary sheets to record these incidents.
- If we decide to take the matter to court, we will need your help in collecting evidence to support our case. This may include you giving evidence in court. If you do need to come to court, we will support you and help you with transport and so on.

Reporting anti-social behaviour

You can report anti-social behaviour:

- to any member of our staff at PCHA or by calling our contact centre on **020 8451 8000**;
- to the police;
- to some other reporting centre, in cases of harassment (for example, a voluntary organisation such as Women's Aid); and
- online at www.online.police.uk (to report non-emergency crimes and anti-social behaviour) or www.met.police.uk/contacts (if you live in London).

Complaints made to us will be passed to our dedicated Neighbourhood Liaison Team who will initially respond in the following timescales.

ASB category	Description	Examples	Target response time
Category 1	Immediate threat of death or serious harm.	Threatened or actual assault, harassment (see 'Harassment' section later) or 'crack houses' (places where drug users use or sell crack cocaine and other illegal drugs).	Neighbourhood Liaison Officer to contact you within one working day of receiving your complaint.
Category 2	Serious incident that needs investigation but is not life-threatening.	Damage or vandalism to shared areas, people hanging about in shared areas, constant stream of visitors to particular flats, noisy parties or verbal abuse.	Within three working days.
Category 3	Low-level anti-social behaviour that has a harmful effect on your quality of life.	Dog fouling and barking, untidy gardens, slamming doors, rubbish, ringing residents' intercoms to cause a nuisance, doing noisy DIY at night.	Within five working days.

How can PCHA help?

We will investigate any anti-social behaviour that you report to us, and record and monitor it. We will draw up an action plan with you and it will include support for you.

What can PCHA do?

- We will listen to your complaint and give you advice on what you can do.
- We will tell you who else you can contact, for example the environmental health department.
- We will expect you to have tried to sort out the problem with your neighbour first, before you contact us.
- We will want to speak to the person you are complaining about (the offender), and any witnesses, to get their side of the story. We will ask for your agreement first.

After investigating and assessing your complaint, we can consider taking the following action.

If the offender is a leaseholder or shared owner, we can:

- send them a warning letter or an acceptable behaviour contract (ABC);
- apply to the court for a housing injunction;
- serve a section 146 notice on the leaseholder causing the nuisance as they are breaking the terms of their lease, which could lead to them losing their home; or
- apply for an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO).

If the offender is a tenant, we can:

- send them a warning letter or an acceptable behaviour contract (ABC);
- downgrade their tenancy from a secure to a demoted tenancy, which means that they have fewer rights;
- take legal action to take their home away from them (in other words, repossess their home);
- apply to the court for a housing injunction; or

- serve them with an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO).

We would only try to remove the person causing the nuisance from their home as a last resort and not until we had tried everything else. If you are a leaseholder and we have to take legal action against you, you will have to pay all reasonable administrative, legal and court costs.

Harassment

Harassment is anti-social behaviour that is deliberately aimed at a person or group because of their race, religion, sex, sexuality, disability, age or any other reason.

The behaviour may be physical violence or verbal threats. It could also include attacks on property (for example, graffiti and vandalism). Harassment can be dealt with in both the civil and criminal courts and there are a number of injunctions (court orders telling you not to do something) and orders (telling you that you must do something) that we can use to prevent harassment. Anyone found guilty of the criminal offence of harassment can face up to six months in prison or a fine, or both.

Where does PCHA stand?

We will not tolerate any forms of harassment and we are committed to stamping it out. Your lease says that you must not harass any other residents, neighbours or visitors. As the leaseholder you are responsible for anyone who lives with or visits you.

We will:

- act quickly to deal with those people who harass others; and
- provide support and advice for victims of harassment.

What can I do if I am being harassed?

- Report any case of harassment to a member of our staff and they will refer your case to our specialist Neighbourhood Liaison Team. You can also report harassment through someone else, for example a friend, a family member or a support worker.

- Report the matter to the police and they may investigate it and prosecute any offenders under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- Keep a record of the nuisance you are experiencing and include the type of nuisance, the dates and times it happened, and the effect it has on you. We can give you diary sheets to record incidents.
- Get support and advice. We can put you in touch with organisations that can offer you help and advice if you are being harassed.

What can PCHA do?

We take harassment very seriously and we will investigate all reports. We will support anyone who believes they are being harassed and act quickly against the people responsible if we find that harassment has taken place.

If you believe you are being harassed, we will:

- treat your complaint in confidence;
- arrange to meet you within 24 hours, where possible, to get more details;
- offer you support and advice and, if appropriate, refer you to other organisations who may be able to help;
- work with the police to help with any criminal investigation or prosecution under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997;
- record details of any damage done, carry out any urgent repair work and remove any graffiti;
- give you advice on legal action you can take, or take legal action ourselves in certain circumstances;
- encourage you to report any harassment to the police if you have been injured or your property has been damaged; and
- monitor all cases of harassment.

Translations

This document gives information about how we deal with anti-social behaviour and harassment. If you need any part of this information in large print, Braille on audio-tape or explained in your own language please contact us on the number below.

English

Dokumentigan wuxuu ku saabsan yahay sida noo qaybinno dabeecadda xun ee bulshada iyo kadeedis. Haddaad u baahan tahay warkan afkaaga-hooyo, afka loogu talagalay dadka aan arki karaan – afka faraha ama CD-ga ama ajeladda rekorka nala xirir. Namberkan isticmaal.

Somali

Este documento proporciona-lhe informações sobre como lidar com comportamento anti-social e assédio. Se necessitar de parte desta informação em caracteres aumentados, em Braille, em CD, cassette áudio ou apresentada no seu idioma, por favor contacte-nos, através do telefone abaixo indicado.

Portuguese

تمدك هذه الوثيقة بالمعلومات اللازمة عن كيفية تعاملنا مع السلوك المعادي للمجتمع والاضطهاد. إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على أي جزء من هذه المعلومات مطبوعاً بأحرف كبيرة أو بطريقة برايل أو مسجلاً على اسطوانة مدمجة أو شريط صوتي أو مشروحاً باللغة التي تتحدثها، يرجى الاتصال بنا على الرقم الموضح أدناه.

Arabic

এই দস্তাবেজটি আমরা কিভাবে সমাজ বিরোধী কার্যকলাপ ও উৎপাত সমস্যার সমাধান করি সেই সম্বন্ধে তথ্য সরবরাহ করবে। যদি আপনি এই তথ্যগুলোর যে কোন একটির সম্বন্ধে বিস্তারিত জানতে চান, অথবা আপনার নিজের ভাষাতে ব্রেল, সিডি, অডিও টেপ-এ পেতে চান তাহলে নিম্নলিখিত নম্বরে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Bengali

Ce document contient des informations sur la façon dont nous traitons les comportements antisociaux et le harcèlement. Si vous souhaitez obtenir une partie de ces informations en gros caractères, en Braille, sur CD, cassette audio ou expliqué dans votre langue, veuillez nous contacter au numéro indiqué ci-dessous.

French

આ દસ્તાવેજ અસામાજિક વર્તણૂક અને પજવણી કરનાર લોકો સાથે અમે કેવી રીતે કાર્યવાહી કરીએ છીએ તેના વિશે માહિતી આપે છે. જો તમારે કોઈ પણ ભાગની આ માહિતી બ્રેઈલ, સીડી ઉપર, આડિયો ટેપ અથવા તમારી પોતાની ભાષામાં સમજી શકો તેની જરૂર હોય તો નીચે જણાવેલ નંબર ઉપર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

Gujarati

Este documento proporciona información sobre cómo actuamos frente al comportamiento antisocial y al acoso. Si necesita esta información en fuentes grandes, Braille, en CD, cinta o en su propio idioma, póngase en contacto con nosotros en el teléfono siguiente.

Spanish

Telephone: 020 8451 8000

