

Anti-social behaviour policy

Who's this for?	All Colleagues and Customers
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Policy Owner	Director of Housing
Other related documents	ASB Procedure Common Housing Allocations Policy Safeguarding Policy, procedures, and toolkit Vulnerable Customers Policy Domestic Abuse Policy Management Transfer Procedure

1. Policy statement

At settle, our purpose is to help people who are struggling to find a place to live. We help our customers to stay in their homes comfortably, so that they can live the life they choose.

This policy sets out settle's approach to supporting safe communities and tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) so that residents can live comfortably in their homes. Our approach enables colleagues to collaborate with residents, communities, and key agencies to create and maintain safe and good quality neighbourhoods.

In addition to legal definitions, settle defines anti-social behaviour as behaviour which causes - or is likely to cause - harassment, alarm, or distress. settle defines nuisance as behaviour which unreasonably and substantially interferes with peaceful enjoyment.

Voice of the Resident

As part of this policy review, we gained feedback through settle voice. The consistent theme in the responses was the need for settle to set a clear plan from the beginning of a case, keep residents up to date on what action we take and ensure we act on what our policy allows us to do. Therefore, it is key to the effectiveness of this policy that we manage resident expectations from the case start on what we can, and what we cannot, do and also where other agencies are more appropriately based to offer support.

2. Current Position

In 2021/22 we received 40 complaints about the way we manage ASB. As a result of changes made to the way we oversee and manage casework, this number reduced to 14 for 2022/23. Our ASB Team manage serious incidents that result in legal action and support the Neighbourhood team with advice on their casework. This has helped to manage the increased workload in 2022/23 which rose to 379 cases - an increase of 97 cases on the previous year.

The focus for the next two years is on earlier intervention in the reports we receive to reduce escalations and the need for legal action. Practically, this is an increased use of softer tools to support earlier conversations between neighbours, such as mediation, and our measure of success is a reduction in the number of cases that are escalated from category 2/3 to a category 1 case.

3. Key principles

- Act in line with key legislation to meet the obligations of the regulatory consumer standards for registered social landlords
- Act impartially and take proportionate decisions/actions on the reports received
- Adopt an early intervention approach, seek to resolve disputes to reduce cases escalating to a more serious level
- Be supportive, responsive and adaptable especially with vulnerable residents.

- Seek solutions with partner agencies to support at risk residents; acting before harm occurs
- Apply learning from casework, including high-profile cases in the sector to drive continuous improvement.
- Ensure we take a swift and robust approach to reports of hate crime and hate related incidents working with partners for a resolution.

4. Objectives

- Residents can easily report ASB via a number of channels and feel supported throughout the time they have a case open
- Set clear expectations of our responsibilities so that residents understand our scope of control in relation to ASB and neighbourhood issues, and where this falls to statutory agencies
- Ensure colleagues are trained to deal with ASB and reports of hate crime effectively.
- Improve customer satisfaction results in relation to ASB.

5. Policy actions

- Deliver community safety events in emerging “hot spot” areas of ASB, utilising data and local knowledge to provide information, advice and reassurance to residents that is supported by partner agencies
- Complete regular training that supports improved case management approaches and refreshes legal understanding
- Provide information about services available from statutory and other agencies. This includes referring matters to the Police when it is a criminal act as settle do not have legal powers to investigate crime
- Monthly case reviews completed with both ASB and Neighbourhood Officers, demonstrating learning and improvements
- Refer to the complex case panel where support is required from internal teams to resolve a case
- Ensure any high-profile cases where risks were not managed in other organisations are made known to colleagues
- Ensure we meet our legal obligations as set out in section 8 of the policy.

6. Desired outcomes

- Residents feel safe and comfortable living in their homes and surrounding community – achieved through effective case management and a multi-agency approach
- Effective intervention to resolve reports - resulting in a minimal number of cases requiring legal action.
- Improved customer satisfaction scores in relation to case management

- Referral pathways and clear escalation routes for relevant external agencies
- Evidence of learning and improvement from incidents and case reviews
- Colleagues feeling supported to refer cases and for those managing cases directly, ensure they have appropriate levels of support when dealing with serious incidents.

7. Performance indicators

- Reduction in the number of legal interventions required compared to 22/23 (16 cases) - supported through earlier intervention taken
- Reduction in complaints made about our investigations into ASB compared to 22/23 (14 complaints)
- Reduction in the number of cases escalated to the category 1 stage of investigation
- Increased use of intervention methods to support resolution including referrals made to mediation
- Increased satisfaction for victims being kept informed with reports they make
- Increased satisfaction for residents feeling safe where they live
- Through a revised approach to the complex case panel, an increased number of referrals made by the neighbourhood and ASB teams
- 100% of housing colleagues complete annual ASB training.

8. Key legislation

- ASB Act 2003
- ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 & Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or where there is a business need or major changes in legislation.