



Antisocial behaviour

Getting involved and having your say

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - GETTING INVOLVED AND HAVING YOUR SAY

South Essex Homes Antisocial Behaviour
Tenant compact.
An agreement between tenants and South Essex Homes

South Essex Homes - keeping you informed

1 Aim of the Compact

It is clear from our communications with you, our residents, that antisocial behaviour is an area of concern we are committed to tackling. This agreement will give details of what we can do to tackle incidents of anti-social behaviour and what levels of service you can expect from us as agreed with Southend Tenants' and Residents' Federation.

We have created this compact as a result of wide-ranging consultation with tenants, our staff and other organisations. We and the Southend Tenants' and Residents' Federation are committed to working together to tackle antisocial behaviour and promote the aims of this agreement.



Chair of the Board
of South Essex Homes



Interim Chair of Southend Tenants'
and Residents' Federation



Chief Executive
of South Essex Homes



Strategic Head of Housing
Adult and Community Services
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

2 What is antisocial behaviour?

There is no commonly agreed definition of antisocial behaviour but it can include a number of minor incidents, such as pets and occasional noise, to more serious incidents of neighbour conflict, serious persistent noise and criminal activity.

It can cover but is not restricted to:

- Physical assault
- Neighbour dispute
- Spoken or written abuse
- Substance misuse (for example, alcohol or sniffing aerosols)
- Offensive behaviour
- Vehicle nuisance
- Graffiti
- Pirate radio
- Rubbish and litter
- Threatening behaviour
- Noise
- Damage to property
- Using or selling drugs
- People drinking alcohol on the street
- Untidy gardens
- Abandoned cars
- Arson and attempted arson
- Pets and animals
- Youth nuisance

3 *Legal definitions of antisocial behaviour*

'Acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself'

(Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

'Conduct which is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person and directly or indirectly relates to or affects the housing management function of a relevant landlord or

Conduct which consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation owned or managed by a relevant landlord for an unlawful purpose'

(Section 153A(1) and 153B(2) of the Housing Act 1996)

4 *Our principles on antisocial behaviour*

Everyone has the right to their chosen lifestyle as long as this does not spoil the quality of life for others.

You need to respect your neighbours and be tolerant of others.

We have a role as landlord to make sure that we enforce these rights.

What to do if you suffer from antisocial behaviour

- If you are experiencing antisocial behaviour, you should contact your neighbourhood services team for advice. However minor the matter, we are happy to offer you advice and help in dealing with the complaint. It is our aim to see a satisfactory ending to every dispute.
- If you witness a crime you must contact the police and get an incident number.
- If a crime has been committed, you must contact the police and your neighbourhood services officer.

5 When receiving a report of antisocial behaviour

You can make a report of antisocial behaviour either in person, by phone, in writing or by e-mail, or someone can report the matter on your behalf. We, the neighbourhood services team, will record complaints of antisocial behaviour

Your neighbourhood services officer will decide on the most appropriate course of action after consulting you.

We can take action against any tenant or leaseholder. Please remember that tenants are ultimately responsible for the behaviour of whoever lives at, or visits, their home.

Targets

- We will respond to all reports of antisocial behaviour.
- We will treat all allegations of antisocial behaviour seriously.
- We will make sure we record your reports accurately.
- We will investigate all cases thoroughly.
- Each case of antisocial behaviour is different and your neighbourhood services officer will assess it.

6 We will act in the strictest confidence at all times

We will give everyone involved the opportunity to tell us their side of events (acting at all times in the strictest of confidence). We will not reveal names, addresses or events without the permission of the people who have given us that information. If during our investigations the identity of any person is likely to be revealed, we will discuss this in detail before we take any action.

7 We will maintain communication with residents at all times

We aim to sort out cases of antisocial behaviour as quickly as possible. We will write to everyone concerned telling them about our action and the progress of the case.

If the matter develops into a long case, for example, involving legal action, we will give feedback at each stage.

We will advise any agencies involved of the need to keep people informed throughout.

When we have finished our investigations and taken any action needed, we will write to the person who made the complaint.

Targets

- Within seven working days, we will write to all relevant people once we have closed the case.
- We will send out satisfaction questionnaires to gather information on our performance within seven working days of closing the case.

8 We will monitor how effective our response is to antisocial behaviour through resident satisfaction questionnaires

We will:

- send out resident satisfaction questionnaires in all cases (where appropriate);
- monitor responses and record them on a database;
- review cases; and

report this information to our board (and twice a year to the Southend Tenants' and Residents' Federation).

Targets

- We will work with Southend Tenants' and Residents' Federation to improve people's satisfaction with our service.

9 Working together

We will work closely with a range of partners, for example, the Youth Offending Service, environmental health, and Essex police to provide the most appropriate solution to antisocial behaviour.

We will occasionally suggest that complaints are better dealt with by other agencies that can offer more effective advice and actions. In these circumstances we will work with the person making the complaint to make sure that they receive appropriate advice.

We will offer mediation (free of charge to our residents) so everyone involved in the dispute can work together to sort the matter out.

We have officers in the Southend Multi-Agency Antisocial behaviour Response Team (SMAART) who work with the police and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council to tackle antisocial behaviour.

We are a member of the Antisocial Behaviour Action Group (ASBAG) which meets every month to sort out complaints of antisocial behaviour.

10 *We will advise and help victims of antisocial behaviour to gather evidence*

We will give you a diary, and advice on how to use it, to record evidence and collect details of antisocial behaviour.

We will collect the diaries and let you know if there is enough information to take further action.

We will give you a Dictaphone (small tape recorder) to gather evidence if you prefer.

If you cannot gather evidence, you should contact your neighbourhood services officer who will be able to give you advice and help.

We will consider using CCTV to gather evidence of antisocial behaviour.

We will consider using specialist companies to act as professional witnesses to gather evidence on behalf of residents.

We will work with other agencies to gather evidence that they may have already gained.

11 We will take appropriate action against tenants who commit significant acts of antisocial behaviour

We will actively do all we can to sort out cases of antisocial behaviour.

There may be times where the nature of the complaint is as a result of people's different lifestyles. If we get involved in a dispute, it may make matters worse rather than improve the situation. In these instances, we may advise you to speak to your neighbour direct if you feel able to do so.

When preparing a case for eviction, we will need the co-operation from those residents who are affected.

We will not rehouse families we have evicted from our homes, within the past five years, for antisocial behaviour.

12 We will provide support to victims and those committing the antisocial behaviour

We will provide support before, during and after any enforcement action.

We will make sure victims and the people accused of antisocial behaviour are familiar with court procedures before any hearing.

We will provide childcare facilities if you need to go to court.

We will provide transport to court if you need to go.

We will consider whether extra security measures would prevent antisocial behaviour.

We will work with all relevant agencies to provide support, advice and help to those responsible for antisocial behaviour on improving their behaviour.

We will consider providing other accommodation (either permanent or temporary) if you are suffering from harassment.

13 We will consider using other approaches to prevent antisocial behaviour

We recognise that preventing antisocial behaviour is as important as enforcement action. With this in mind, we will consider other approaches to tackling antisocial behaviour, including but not limited to:

- mediation;
- community conferences;
- family support projects;
- acceptable behaviour contracts;
- reparation schemes; and
- referrals.

14 We will consider using all approaches in taking enforcement action against antisocial behaviour

We recognise that there will be times where we need to take enforcement action to prevent antisocial behaviour taking place or getting worse. With this in mind, we will consider using:

- antisocial behaviour injunctions;
- antisocial behaviour orders;
- a notice of seeking possession;
- a notice of possession proceedings;
- a notice to quit;
- a suspended possession order; or
- an absolute possession order (eviction).

15 What you can do to help

The best thing to do is to avoid action that might cause a nuisance to others. For example:

- do not carry out loud work at night (including repairs);
- talk to your neighbours if you are planning a party;
- do not play your TV, radio, hi-fi or musical instruments loudly, especially at night;

- keep your dogs and other pets under control (if this applies);
- be aware of where your children are playing, who is supervising them and what they are doing;
- talk to your children (and visitors to your home) if their behaviour is likely to cause a nuisance to other people; and
- get rid of rubbish and waste in an appropriate way.

People living in flats

People in flats have neighbours living to the side and either above or below them (or both). They also share halls, corridors, gardens and other facilities. As a result, more people living in flats are affected by a neighbour's behaviour and lifestyle than those living in houses or bungalows.

Because of this type of living, residents of flats have a greater responsibility to make sure that their lifestyles do not unreasonably interfere with other people. There has to be a certain amount of give and take but above all there should still be respect for each person to enjoy their home peacefully. You can live peacefully with each other if everyone follows some simple rules.

Family members and visitors

As a council tenant or leaseholder you are responsible, under the terms of your lease or tenancy conditions, for the behaviour of your household, visitors and pets at your address and in the local area. Your tenancy or lease could be at risk if you break these conditions. You can get a copy of your terms and conditions from your estate officer, who can also answer any questions you have about your obligations.

Contacts

Central Area Housing Office	01702 214200
East Area Housing Office	01702 589498
West Area Housing Office	01702 511521
Southend Multi Agency Anti Social Behaviour Response Team (SMAART)	01702 431212
Out-of-hours emergency repairs	0800 833 160
Southend Police Station	01702 431212
Environmental Health	01702 215811
Environmental Health (out of hours)	01702 466550
Youth Offending Service	01702 534300
Rubbish Watch	01702 215021

Relevant websites

South Essex Homes	www.southessexhomes.co.uk
Southend Tenants' and Residents' Federation	www.strf.co.uk
Southend on Sea Borough Council	www.southend.gov.uk
Department for Communities and Local Government	www.dclg.gov.uk
Home Office	www.homeoffice.gov.uk
Respect Taskforce	www.respect.gov.uk
Essex Police	www.essex.police.uk
Neighbourhood Watch	www.southendcommunity.org.uk





For more information phone: 01702 214200
or visit www.southessexhomes.co.uk

South Essex Homes - keeping you informed

Polish

Jeceli chciałaby Pan / chciałaby Pani otrzymaæ tê ulotkê w swoim jêzyku lub jeceli chce Pan/i siê z nami skontaktowaæ, proszê zadzwoniæ pod poni¿szy numer. Skorzystamy z pomocy tłumacza przez telefon, aby pomóc Panu/i w rozmowie.

Hindi

यदि आप इस लीफलेट की कॉपी अपनी मातृ-भाषा में चाहते हों या आप हमसे सम्पर्क करना चाहते हों तो कृपया नीचे दिए नम्बर पर फ़ोन कीजिए। हम आपकी पृष्ठताछ से निश्चिन्ने के लिए टेलिफोन दुभाषिए की सहायता लेंगे।

French

Si vous désirez une copie de cet imprimé dans votre langue maternelle ou si vous souhaitez nous contacter, veuillez téléphoner au numéro ci-dessous. Nous nous servons d'interprètes par téléphone pour répondre à votre demande.

Urdu

اگر آپ اس لیف لیٹ کی کاپی اپنی مادری زبان میں حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں یا اگر آپ ہم سے رابطہ کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم مجھے دینے کے نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے۔ ہم آپ کی مطلوبہ معلومات فراہم کرنے کے لئے ٹیلیفون پر ترجمان زبان کی خدمات استعمال کریں گے۔

Chinese

如果你想索取此册的中文译本，或想與我們聯絡，請致電下列號碼。我們會經電話傳譯員幫助你查詢。

For a copy of this leaflet in any other language or format, or for more copies please call the number below.



01702 236 100

This document is also available in large print, on audio tape or on computer disk. Please contact corporate services on the number above and they will arrange this for you.