

Southwark Landlords Charter

Southwark Council, the police and partners in the community are working hard to keep you safe.

Introduction

This charter has been agreed by social housing providers working in partnership within the London Borough of Southwark to combat antisocial behaviour (ASB).

The charter was created because people living and working in Southwark have told us that they are concerned about crime and antisocial behaviour in the borough.

Everybody has the right to feel safe and protected no matter where they are or who they are with. Intimidating and nuisance behaviour caused by individuals or groups has the power to blight the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. It has been recognised that such behaviours can significantly affect the peaceful enjoyment of people's environment and as such, need to be dealt with.

Please note that we refers to signatories of the charter and you refers to members of the public.

This charter therefore sets out:

- A common understanding of ASB for all signatories of the charter
- A commitment to adopt a victim centred approach
- How we will support the most vulnerable victims and witnesses
- How we will deal with reported cases and the minimum standards people can expect from us
- How we will share our intelligence and work together to reduce the level and fear of ASB in Southwark

Most importantly this charter will ensure that the victims of ASB, whether individuals, families or communities, feel supported in addressing nuisance or intimidating behaviour. We want people to know where they can get help to deal with problems and what they can expect from agencies irrespective of their tenures.

A common understanding of anti social behaviour

There are two definitions in legislation for anti social behaviour. Signatories of this charter will recognise both definitions.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 defines antisocial behaviour as a person 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'.

Another definition from the Housing Act 1996 that is widely adopted by social landlords and applied in the use of antisocial behaviour injunctions (ASBIs) is:

'...engaging in or threatening to engage in conduct causing or likely to cause a nuisance or annoyance to a person residing, visiting or otherwise engaging in a lawful activity in the locality'.

We recognise the need for flexibility in terms of defining ASB in order to provide an effective response to the complex needs of residents. We jointly recognise that ASB can take many forms

which may fall under broader headings, from behaviours which are targeted at individuals to behaviours which affect the wider community.

Following the Government's consultation on rationalising the set of tools and powers available to tackle ASB, the ASB and Policing Act 2014 will deliver significant reforms including:

- Identifying vulnerable and repeat victims earlier through better logging of calls and managing of cases
- Simpler legal processes reducing the number of tools and powers from 19 to 6 orders
- Introducing Community Harm statements for courts to see the impact of ASB on peoples daily lives
- A Community Trigger to force agencies to deal with multiple reports of ASB

This charter does not confine itself to any strict definition of what constitutes ASB but commits signatories to a common understanding and most importantly a victim centred approach.

The recommendations in this charter centre on activities which support the resolution of ASB incidents more effectively and those which might prevent it from happening in the first place.

Placing victims and witnesses at the centre of services

The signatories to this charter are committed to the ongoing improvement of services for communities and individuals who experience or witness antisocial behaviour. It is imperative that victims of crime and ASB feel supported, know where to turn and understand what support is available for them. We recognise the adverse impact antisocial behaviour can have on the day to day lives of residents and those who work and visit the borough.

A more streamlined, multi-agency approach will further strengthen existing services and aim to improve outcomes for victims in terms of coordinating support and increasing feedback on case progression.

We therefore agree to:

- Adopt a cross agency case management approach to ensure robust responses, particularly in relation to repeat victims
- Adopt a common framework for measuring the risks associated with ASB taking in to account the specific needs and risk/ vulnerability of a victim/complainant in order to inform the level and nature of response
- Agree detailed action plans with complainants so that they fully understand the actions that can and will be taken
- Ensure services are simple and easy to access
- Improve our internal processes for gathering customer feedback and continuous service improvement mechanisms
- Review and develop the Southwark Victims' Charter. Increase our transparency in working with victims and witnesses

Supporting the most vulnerable families and individuals by adopting an early intervention/prevention approach

We believe that a balanced approach between prevention, community involvement, early intervention and enforcement is essential in finding long term sustainable solutions.

Experience has taught us that investing in one type of intervention alone does not necessarily address the wider causes or manage the consequences of ASB. This partnership agrees to work together embracing the principles of prevention, early intervention and support for families and individuals who may require support to deal with issues that are leading to ASB and criminal behaviour

We agree to improve collaboration with police, community safety teams and other agencies including mental health teams to:

- Identify the most vulnerable families and refer to appropriate support agencies
- Make full use of parenting facilitators to work with families where children's behaviour is causing issues
- Refer young people at risk of offending to the Challenge and Support service
- Ensure that there are robust measures in place to identify safeguarding issues

Adopting minimum standards

The signatories to this charter are committed to providing consistent minimum standards in responding to ASB complaints and agree to adopt the minimum standards as outlined in the table below:

Category 1 You will be contacted within 24 hours	Report of offensive and hate related graffiti
	Hate crime, such as hate crime relating to religion and faith, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability
	Using or threatening to use violence / physical violence
Category 2 You will be contacted within 3 working days	Rowdy behaviour
	Vandalism, graffiti and damage to property
	Large groups congregating
Category 3 You will be contacted within 5 working days	Noisy neighbours
	Street drinking and begging
	Litter, rubbish, flytipping
	Misuse of motorised vehicles
	Neighbour disputes

Sharing information and managing our resources

The signatories to this charter are committed to embracing a partnership approach to tackling antisocial behaviour. With the advent of the Anti Social Behaviour and Policing Act in 2014 there is an expectation that partners will work together and share information. The community trigger will make it incumbent on partners to do so.

Partners pledge to:

- Participate in relevant strategic and operational Safer Southwark Partnership meetings and act upon decisions made at those meetings. This will include the Anti Social Behaviour Strategic Group, Partnership Tasking Group (PTG) and area based information sharing groups and case conferences.
- Share appropriate and relevant information including enforcement data, ensuring there is an accurate picture of ASB across the borough
- Report ASB performance information to residents and customers

Moving forward

This Charter will serve to promote and contribute to more accountability and trust between agencies and various housing providers building a shared commitment to work together and problem solve issues that affect the whole community.

The signatories of this charter agree to its annual review and refresh, ensuring we deliver best practice high quality services for the residents of Southwark.