

Operational Policy - managing antisocial behaviour for Council housing tenants

Introduction

This policy statement outlines how Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) will work to challenge antisocial behaviour that impacts on its tenants and/or is perpetrated by them.

Scope

The Tenancy Agreement sets out the tenants responsibilities. This policy explains what behaviour is considered as antisocial, how complaints can be reported and how the Council will manage them.

Related documents

- IBC Tenancy Agreement 2016
- Tenants Handbook 2016
- A Fairer Ipswich: Equality Scheme 2012 – 2015

Definitions

“Tenants” refers to sole and joint tenants

“Tenancy” refers to introductory and secure tenancies

What is Antisocial Behaviour? (ASB)

ASB is any activity which is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person. This may include behaviours such as:

- Noise;
- Vandalism;
- Aggressive and threatening behaviour;
- Hate behaviour targeted to groups because of their perceived differences;
- Intimidation;
- Harassment;
- Actual violence against people or property; and
- Irresponsible pet ownership.

IBC also regards the following behaviours as antisocial:

- The storage or use of drugs in a Council property;
- Use of a Council property for unlawful purposes;
- Misuse of common areas;
- Inappropriate use of gardens; or
- Failure to maintain a garden.

Reporting antisocial behaviour

Complaints about antisocial behaviour caused by or to Council tenants can be made by telephone, visiting the Customer Service Centre, by email, in writing and via the Council's website. All complaints are recorded and investigated.

Case management

Each new complaint is recorded by a Housing ASB Officer and a case file opened. An initial assessment is made to identify if there is any other information available about the complainant and the perpetrator.

Contact is normally first made with the complainant to establish the facts and identify what the impact is of the behaviour being complained about to assess the risk. This then determines what course of action is most appropriate.

It is unlikely that a complaint about antisocial behaviour will be resolved quickly. Evidence that the activity has taken place and is more than a one-off event is normally required and the complainant may be asked to keep a record of any further incidents or events that they witness and consider to be antisocial. Other residents may also be approached to see what the impact of the behaviour being complained about is having on them.

Available actions

There are a number of actions available to IBC to deal with complaints about antisocial behaviour. Each case will be considered on the evidence available and the most appropriate action taken. This may include legal action through the courts and can result in the repossession of a tenant's Council home.

Managing expectations

For the person complaining about antisocial behaviour it may seem a very slow process and it is important that they are kept informed with how the case is being managed. There are occasions when other agencies are involved and IBC is unable to provide a full update. However it will always seek to reassure the complainant that there is work going on to seek the right solution.

References

- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Control of Dogs Order 1992
- Dangerous Wild Animal Act 1997
- Animal Welfare Act 2006

Equalities

IBC is committed to tackling the barriers and discrimination that many people face in their lives to ensure that its policies and services are appropriate, accessible and relevant to everyone.

Review

Unless there are any changes to legislation beforehand, the next review of this policy will be in November 2018 and every three years thereafter.