


ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

**RESPECT
STANDARD
FOR HOUSING
MANAGEMENT**


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1. COMMITMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Message from the Chair of Homes for Islington ALMO Board

	<p>Ann Lucas</p> <p>Homes for Islington is committed to ensure that our resident's are able to enjoy peace and quiet in their homes and do not have to suffer the anti social behaviour of others.</p> <p>We will not tolerate antisocial behaviour and we will take appropriate enforcement or support action to tackle the causes and effects of anti social behaviour.</p> <p>Working with our partners we will provide access to support services both directly or through the engagement of external agencies to tackle the causes of antisocial behaviour and to support and meet the individual needs of our residents.</p> <p>This policy outlines our aims and objectives towards managing anti social behaviour and highlights our approach to working with the Council, Police and other key members of the Islington Strategic Partnership.</p>
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Statement from the Chief Executive

	<p>Eamon McGoldrick</p> <p>Homes for Islington takes anti social behaviour very seriously and we are committed to tackling it on Islington's estates.</p> <p>As a demonstration of our commitment to meeting resident needs and improving our services we signed up to the Governments Respect Standard for Housing Management in May 2007</p> <p>We have restructured our organisation and put in place in each area housing office a dedicated ASB Team. Further development of our service has seen the introduction of an out of hour's team that can provide a quick response to incidents of ASB as well as providing a high visual presence on our estates.</p> <p>Working in partnership is the key to tackling this problem and as a member of the Islington Strategic Partnership we will continue to have an active role in the development of policies and initiatives designed to address anti social behaviour.</p>
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2. POLICY STATEMENT

Homes For Islington is committed to ensuring that all residents enjoy their right to peace, quiet, and security in and around their homes. We recognise that antisocial behaviour can have a severe effect on the well being of residents and that we have a duty to take action to minimise it. Consequently we are using a range of measures to both prevent ASB happening in the first place and to take action to stop it.

We recognise that the causes and effects of ASB are wide ranging and varied and can effect all members of the community, not just our tenants. We will therefore always seek to work in partnership with other agencies to ensure that all measures available are used effectively to tackle ASB problems, regardless of who owns the property. Our partners include

- Community Safety Partnership
- Police
- Youth Offending Team
- Islington Anti Social Behaviour Team (IASBT)
- Drug Action team
- Environmental Health
- Fire Service
- Court Witness Service / Victim Support
- Education Services
- Young Peoples Services
- Social Services
- Primary Care Trust
- Camden Mediation
- All other Social Landlords

This policy serves to provide a clear outline of our ongoing commitment to dealing with all aspects of anti social behaviour and delivery of a quality and effective housing service.

Homes for Islington's policy highlights the following key values in dealing with anti social behaviour:

- Defining what is unacceptable behaviour for all residents
- Encouraging a self help approach where appropriate
- Set realistic expectations of what HFI can deliver
- Work with partners, agencies and the community to deliver effective services
- Identify and adopt best practice
- Value diversity and respect for all
- Take swift and appropriate enforcement
- Keeping reporters of ASB and the community informed of action taken

Quality Management System – Procedures & Processes

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, amending the Housing Act 1996 requires us to publish a statement of our policies and procedures with regard to antisocial behaviour. This document meets this requirement and serves as an outline for Homes for Islington's approach to managing antisocial behaviour across each of our estates and managed properties and demonstrates our commitment to meeting the varying needs of our residents.

The key to our delivery of services is built on the ongoing development and review of our procedures and processes which when followed either by Homes for Islington as a stand alone organisation or in conjunction with partners will serve to meet the requirements of our customers.

This Antisocial Behaviour policy sets out Homes for Islington's processes for addressing antisocial behaviour in the delivery of Islington Council's housing management function.

This document represents the top level of our anti social behaviour quality management system and is supported by several procedures and guidelines.

3. SERVICE PROMISE

Homes for Islington takes all reports about anti social behaviour seriously. We are determined to tackle it and work with the council, police and other agencies. We will investigate all reports and take appropriate action.

Our service promise to you when dealing with Anti Social behaviour is:

- We will take all reports of ASB and harassment seriously whether made in person, in writing or over the phone
- If you report ASB or harassment then we will make an appointment to carry out an interview, if necessary within, five working days or 24 hours in serious cases
- We will take appropriate action against those responsible, where we have evidence
- We will review all reported cases of ASB at least once a month and inform you of progress. If we decide to close a case we will write to you and tell you why
- We will provide ongoing support for as long as victims feel it is necessary and as long as reasonably practical
- Please remember that the action we take must be reasonable in light of how serious the problem is and it has to stand a fair chance of working. We may not be able to take any legal action if we have insufficient evidence to support the action at court

4. STRATEGIC AND LEGAL CONTEXT

Partnership Working

One of the key drivers in addressing anti – social behaviour and making a positive impact on our resident's lives, lies with the advent of partnership working. As an organisation we recognise the importance of developing strong working relationships and links with agencies and services that support the needs of our residents.

As an organisation that has signed up to the Governments Respect Standard for Housing Management we are committed to tackling anti social behaviour and to ensuring both availability and access to support services that meet our residents needs.

Homes for Islington are a member of the Islington Strategic Partnership (ISP). This Partnership includes membership from the Police, Islington Council, Primary Care Trust, Fire Service and several key organisations and agencies.

The ISP is supported by a number of theme groups one of which is the Safer Islington Partnership (SIP). This group of which HFI is an active member is focused on addressing antisocial behaviour and ensuring the safety of the community in Islington.

A number of these theme groups include: -

Corporate Crime and reduction Group
Community and Enforcement Group
Hate Crime Group

The delivery of services between these respective partners are supported and monitored by the application of agreed service level agreements, protocols and where applicable terms of reference.

Policy and Strategy

The Homes for Islington 's Antisocial Behaviour Policy links with existing strategies and policies that impact on the reduction of antisocial behaviour in the borough. In addition this policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Islington

Crime, Disorder & Drug Misuse Strategy 2005 – 08
Housing Strategy 2004 – 2007
Domestic Violence Strategy 2006 – 2009
Prevention of Homelessness Strategy 2006 - 2010

HFI

Community Engagement Strategy 2007 – 2010
Communications Strategy 2006 – 07
Equality and Diversity Strategy 2006 –2010
Resident Involvement Strategy 2007 – 2009

Copies of these documents can be located by accessing either the Islington Council or Homes for Islington's Websites.

The Antisocial Behaviour processes and procedures designed by Homes for Islington adhere to the Government guidelines in tackling antisocial behaviour. The procedures and processes are compatible with the following legislation:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Children's Act 1989 (amended 2005)
- Children's Act 2004 and Every Child Matters Next Steps 2004
- Civil Evidence Act 1995
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Disability and Discrimination Act 1995 (amended 2004)
- Environmental Protection Act 2002
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Housing Acts 1985, 1996 & 2004
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Local Government Act 2000
- Police and Justice Act 2006
- Police Reform Act 2002
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2002)

5. DEFINITION OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

There is no one set definition as to what antisocial behaviour is. Each Local Authority or ALMO or Housing Association have identified their own terms of reference or view as to what they perceive ASB to be. This is not to discount any standardised statements provided by the Home Office or Local Agencies such as the Greater London Authority.

Homes for Islington have produced and work to the following definition: -

The term antisocial behaviour includes all types of behaviour, which affect the quality of life of local people. It is the bad behaviour of a few that seriously affects those around them who experience it.

Antisocial behaviour may or may not amount to a criminal act. What is important is the effect of the behaviour on other people.

There are many types of behaviour, which are considered as antisocial, some of these are listed below:

- Noise nuisance - excessive noise
- Unruly behaviour of groups hanging around
- Graffiti and criminal damage
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Fly tipping or dumping rubbish
- Playing ball games in unauthorised areas
- Driving vehicles recklessly or dangerously

6. DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

Introduction

HFI values equality and social justice and condemns all forms of harassment and intimidation towards people who we serve. For this purpose we have developed a single policy that outlines our commitment and approach to managing cases of harassment.

The definition of harassment that HFI has adopted is derived from and an extension of the Inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence and is also based on 'victim perception'. This means that HFI will use this policy and procedures to record and where possible, respond to and investigate any complaint where the victim believes that they are being harassed.

Definition

Harassment is deliberate action designed to intimidate or offend as well as cause fear and distress to victims. Harassment is action targeted at certain groups or individuals based on the prejudices of others; examples of these prejudices include:

Age	Disability	HIV/AIDS
Race/ethnicity	Religious Belief	Domestic Violence
Gender	Sexuality	Learning Difficulties
Other Vulnerabilities		

Generally, harassment differs from antisocial behaviour in that it is deliberate and targeted victimisation of groups or individuals as opposed to inconsiderate action, or lack of action which causes nuisance and interferes with, or prevents others from having the quiet enjoyment of their homes and surrounding areas.

HFI has adopted a victim centred approach to dealing with reported harassment. This means that a case will be investigated using the harassment policy and procedure unless through investigation it becomes clear that action is not deliberate and targeted.

7. DEFINITION OF HATE CRIME

Introduction

In addition to responding to cases of harassment suffered by our residents we also act as a third party reporting site for hate crime. In line with the action plan in place for the Safer Islington Partnership we are one of several organisations and sites identified, to provide a confidential reporting facility for any individual either in residence or traversing through Islington to report hate crime.

This process allows for incidents to be fed straight to the Police for recording and appropriate investigation.

Definition

Hate crime includes everything from minor incidents such as verbal abuse, threatening behaviour or malicious communications, right through to the most serious crimes. It can be broken down into the following types of incident:

- Disability incident - any incident which is motivated by hatred of someone on the grounds of their disability.
- Racial incident - any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.
- Faith / hate incident - any incident which is perceived to be motivated by faith or religious hatred.
- Homophobic incident - any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person.
- Transphobic incident – any incident which is perceived to be motivated by hatred of someone on the grounds of their transgender or transsexuality.
- Domestic violence incident

8. DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Introduction

Domestic violence is a crime that can have a devastating effect on survivors and their families. Homes for Islington have produced a single policy for managing cases of domestic violence built on the following principles:

- serious consideration is given to the safety of survivors and their children
- survivors are dealt with quickly, sensitively and effectively and are signposted or referred to specialist agencies if appropriate

- where appropriate, action is taken against perpetrators of domestic violence

HFI is committed to providing support to survivors; and, where appropriate, taking action against residents who are known perpetrators of domestic violence.

Definition

Islington's definition of domestic violence for monitoring purposes is as follows:

'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.'

Islington Domestic Violence Strategy 2006-9 describes domestic violence as follows:

- 'Domestic violence is best understood as a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another within the context of an intimate or family relationship. It is manifested in a variety of ways including, but not restricted to physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse and the imposition of social isolation. Most commonly domestic violence is a combination of a range of abuses and the abuse is likely to be ongoing, repeated and to escalate in severity over time.
- Domestic violence is primarily a gender-based crime, consisting of violence by men against women in the overwhelming majority of cases. However, domestic violence occurs in same sex relationships and heterosexual men are also abused by their partners or other family members. Domestic violence is deeply rooted and widespread, affecting as many as one in nine households at any one time. It affects women, children and men from all social, geographic and cultural groups. People from every class, age, race and religion are abused, as are people with disabilities.'

The description reflects the pattern, continuing nature and variety of abuse, and emphasises the misuse of power that underlies all domestic violence.

- HFI has adopted the same definition of domestic violence as the London Borough of Islington in acknowledgement of its commitment to working in partnership with relevant departments within the Council.

9. TENANCY OBLIGATIONS

Homes for Islington expects all its tenants and residents to display acceptable standards of behaviour at all times.

We expect all our tenants to abide by the terms of their tenancy agreements and we will enforce these terms should they be broken. This includes responsibility for their own conduct, their family members, relatives, others residing with them and their visitors.

All new tenants are provided with a welcome pack, which outlines the conditions of their tenancy.

We will explain the conditions of the tenancy at the sign up interview for each new tenant and highlight the possible implications of what action may be taken if they fail to comply with the conditions of tenancy.

In serious incidents we will take legal action to enforce these terms, which could result in the loss of a home.

We are also committed to ensuring that our staff and the staff of our partners and contractors are able to carry out their duties in safety and free from harassment and intimidation.

10. RESPECT

In January 2006 the Government introduced its programme of RESPECT, a cross governmental and wide ranging strategy to promote respect positively, address bad behaviour, tackle its causes and offer leadership and support to local people and services.

This ongoing programme serves to unite and integrate the work of central government, local agencies, local communities and ultimately every citizen, with the aim of delivering solutions to tackle antisocial behaviour and create a society built around respect.

The respect programme was supported further with the introduction in August 2006 of the Respect Standard for Housing Management.

This voluntary standard provides recognition for those housing providers who deliver good services, while providing a benchmark to aim towards for landlords striving to improve their services.

The standard is built on the following six core commitments:

- Commitment 1 – Accountability, leadership and commitment
- Commitment 2 – Empowering and reassuring residents
- Commitment 3 – Prevention and early intervention
- Commitment 4 – Tailored services for residents and provision of support for victims and witnesses
- Commitment 5 – Protecting communities through swift enforcement
- Commitment 6 – Support to tackle the causes of antisocial behaviour

Each commitment features a number of building blocks that when applied will deliver an effective response to antisocial behaviour and help to create a culture of respect.

Homes for Islington signed up to the Governments Respect Standard for Housing Management on 22nd May 2007. A launch event hosted by HFI held in partnership with Islington Council and featuring several neighbouring Registered Social Landlords was held on 17th July 2007.

11. TOOLS WE WILL USE TO ADDRESS ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

We have in place in each of our area housing offices dedicated teams to manage reported cases of ASB. These teams are made up of a Team Leader, ASB Officers and Assistant.

These officers have an array of tools at their disposal for combating antisocial behaviour in partnership with other agencies. A description of the tools available is as follows: -

Acceptable Behaviour Contract

Acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs) are non- –legally binding written contracts between one or more local agency and an individual who has behaved anti-socially, outlining what the person should or should not do. They are often used with children and young people, but can equally be applied to adults, when a warning has been unsuccessful in addressing a problem.

Anti Social Behaviour Injunctions

An injunction is a civil order made by the county court to compel an adult to do something or to prevent a particular action or behaviour. They are usually applied to seek a stop to nuisance, annoyance and harassment. Breach of an injunction is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs)

Antisocial behaviour orders are civil orders that protect the public from behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress. They are not criminal penalties, but a breach of an ASBO is a criminal offence. They can be applied to any individual aged over 10 who has displayed antisocial behaviour in the preceding six months. They are designed to protect the public from further antisocial behaviour.

Crack House Closure Orders

For use when a property has been taken over by drug users or dealers of class A drugs. The application of an order can be used to close the premises down, for a period of up to 3 months with capacity to extend the order for a further 3 months if necessary. During the time of the order the property is sealed and it is an offence to enter or remain in the property.

Demotion Orders

Demotion orders are used by landlords when a tenant, resident or visitor to the tenant's home has behaved or threatened to behave in a way which is capable of causing nuisance and affects the housing management of an area. They allow landlords to apply to the courts to reduce the security of tenure for tenants, by removing a number of tenancy rights, such as the right to buy and the right to exchange. If a tenant continues to misbehave then action can be taken to seek possession of their home.

Designated Public Place Orders

A Designated Public Places Order (DPPOs) is a power, which allows local authorities to apply restrictions on public drinking in a designated area of their choosing. Designed to address alcohol related nuisance or disorder it is not an offence to consume alcohol in the area but police, police community support officers and other officers accredited through the community safety accredited scheme have powers to control the consumption of alcohol within the designated area. If they believe a person is consuming alcohol or intends to consume alcohol they can request that they stop and confiscate the alcohol whether or not it has been opened. If someone without a reasonable excuse, fails to comply with the officer's request they can be issued with a fixed penalty notice or face arrest and prosecution.

Dispersal Orders

Dispersal powers are used in public spaces (such as shopping arcades or parks) where groups gather and intimidate and harass the public. Once an area has been designated a dispersal area then police can direct groups of two or more people to leave if they are causing a nuisance, and if they do not live in the area. They may be excluded from the area for up to 24 hours.

Environmental Estate Security Works

HFI has a policy to discourage antisocial behaviour through physical improvements to the local environment. This can take many forms including improved estate lighting, secure door entries, CCTV and climb proof surface covering. Quarterly estate inspections are held to identify areas that could benefit from environmental improvement, these inspections include tenant and resident input as well as involvement of key partners and agencies

Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed penalty notices (FPNs) are one off fines for antisocial behaviour designed to deal with environmental offences like litter graffiti or dog fouling. Police and council officers can issue them and in some cases police community support officers (PCSO) and other accredited persons. Homes for Islington's ASB Response team are currently seeking this accreditation. FPNs can be issued to any persons over 10 years old. The level of fine can vary depending on the circumstances. Local Authorities have the power to set

some fines locally and more serious offences can attract larger fines. If someone fails to pay the fine they can face prosecution.

Housing Support and Supporting People

For residents with support needs that may cause incidents of anti social behaviour we will refer them to our own in house housing support officer, or other appropriate floating support agencies. This will be to provide support to challenge and change unacceptable behaviour and to support the means of tenancy sustainment by stopping such unacceptable behaviour.

Individual Support Orders

This is an order, which can be attached to an anti social behaviour order against a person aged between 10 and 17. They outline positive commitments from the individual to tackle the underlying causes of their anti social behaviour and are overseen by agencies such as the Youth Offending Team or Social Services.

Intervention Orders

Intervention orders can be attached to antisocial behaviour orders in the same way as individual support orders. They are applied to individuals aged 18 or over and are designed to tackle anti social behaviour as a result of drug misuse.

Mediation

HFI work with a local agency to provide an impartial mediation service for resolving disagreements between residents by attempting to find a mutually acceptable resolution.

Noise Monitoring Machines

For residents suffering noise nuisance from neighbours we can install noise monitoring machines, which can be used to monitor and measure the volume of noise, experienced. This can be used in addition to any other supporting evidence, which has been collected.

Parenting Contracts

These are voluntary agreements made between local agencies and a parent or parents. They set out what parent's will do to address the anti social behaviour of children for whom they are responsible. Included within this agreement may be a requirement for attendance at a parenting programme or commitment for the child to attend school regularly.

Parenting Orders

This is a court order where there has been a problem with a young person's behaviour and it is designed to encourage parents to take responsibility for and help improve that behaviour. It may be imposed where a child is made subject to an Anti social behaviour order, convicted of an offence, or where the parent is convicted of failing to ensure that their child attends school.

Possession Proceedings

We will seek to evict a tenant as a last resort option in cases of severe or persistent anti social behaviour where support has been refused or behaviour has not changed. An application will be made to the County Court where the judge will decide whether or not the tenant should be evicted.

Professional Witness

HFI has a covert surveillance capability that can be used to monitor areas that are suffering from antisocial behaviour, providing important visual evidence. Surveillance can be used to identify individuals involved in antisocial behaviour and used to support further enforcement action to deal with the problem.

Witness Support Service

For those residents who have reported anti social behaviour or who may be called upon to appear in court we will offer the services of the Witness Support Service. This is an independent service that looks to guide witnesses through the process of attending court as well as offering assistance and support such as arranging childcare, transport to and from court and the availability of someone to talk to in confidence in their home.

12. APPROACH TO ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Homes for Islington have responded to customer feedback and the changing trends with regard to the use and access of our offices and services.

A review of the efficiency and delivery of our services with a particular focus on anti social behaviour was conducted between 2006 –07. This review served to identify areas of improvement and recognition of best practice from other high performing housing providers.

The recommendations from this review along with the feedback received from tenants have been used to restructure our organisation and to revise our approach to addressing anti social behaviour.

We now operate on the following basis:

ASB Teams

We have in place an anti social behaviour team in each of our four area housing offices. These teams comprise at least two officers, an assistant and a dedicated team leader.

Their purpose and the role of these teams is to: -

ASB Assistant

- Maintain records of each ASB case received
- Arrange acknowledgement and initial interview
- Conduct diary management of actions for each case
- Update reporters of ASB as per operational instructions
- Issue closed case surveys as and when necessary

ASB Officer

- Manage all reported cases of antisocial behaviour
- Take appropriate investigative actions to all cases received
- Maintain regular contact with each reporter of asb to ensure they are aware of progress
- Identify and work with partners relevant to each case
- Maintain case files and computer records
- Ensure appropriate enforcement action is taken

ASB Team Leader

- Monitor the progress of each case
- Ensure accurate records are maintained for each case
- Authorise referral of cases to legal Services
- Authorise the closure of a case
- Authorise risk assessment

ASB Co-ordinator

To provide a strategic link between Homes for Islington and the Safer Islington Partnership and to lead on issues relating to tackling and preventing anti social behaviour.

Out of Hours support

In 2006 we introduced an Out of hours ASB response team. The purpose of this team is to:

- Provide a reassuring presence to residents of Islington
- Patrol estates, supporting residents to help prevent crime and deter anti social behaviour
- Identify and respond to social and environmental issues
- Work closely with members of the community and partners such as the Police and Islington Council to form a joined up strategic approach to tackling anti social behaviour
- Provide a professional witness service

13. REPORTING ASB

We will continue to look at the development of our service to ensure reporting anti social behaviour is as easy as possible for victims.

Reports can be made using the following avenues of contacting one of the local area housing offices either by:

- In person
- By telephone
- By email
- In writing
- By minicom
- By fax

Using the ASB hotline number 020 7527 7272

Full details of how to report ASB can be found in our service promise leaflet.

When a report of anti social behaviour is received we will look to undertake the following: -

The reporter

- Arrange an interview with the victim
- Ensure the victim is aware of our commitment to dealing with their report
- Advise the victim of any relevant or available support services
- Agree an action plan for managing their reported case
- Provide an individually tailored support pack of relevant information
- Identify and arrange interviews with any witnesses to support the case
- Agree a suitable time period for updating the reporter as to the progress of the case
- Confirm confidentiality unless the reporter is agreeable for any disclosure
- Identify and progress any early remedies such as mediation

- Identify any need for additional security measures such as fireproof letterboxes or improved lighting.

The alleged perpetrator

- Arrange interview with the alleged perpetrator
- Identify any support options that may be open and refer as necessary
- For young people look to access support schemes such as the Multi Agency Inclusion Panel and diversionary initiatives such as the LIFE project

14. SUPPORTING REPORTERS OF ASB

Witness Support

We recognise the important role that individuals who report ASB and witnesses play in assisting us to tackle ASB problems.

The speed and success of any action to deal with a problem is dependent on the full participation of the witnesses involved. We recognise that a demonstrable record of success in dealing with ASB cases is fundamental to building confidence and trust in witnesses.

We will, therefore, provide support to our witnesses throughout the whole process of dealing with a problem.

The level of support given will be tailored to meet the needs of the particular individual and the circumstances of the case. As a minimum standard we will provide a named contact who will maintain a regular contact with witnesses, keeping them as fully informed as possible throughout the process.

Other support may include:

- Referral to Witness Support Service
- Providing additional security measures to their home. For example, we may provide or access through other agencies practical security measures such as door chains, security lights, spy holes, etc
- Providing personal protection measures such as panic alarms.
- By arrangement with the Police providing 'panic buttons' which enable the witness to make the equivalent of a 999 call at the press of a button.
- Referral to Housing Support Service

Note:

Some or all of the above may be offered following a risk assessment of the individual circumstances

- By regular liaison with the Police making them aware of witnesses and the levels of risk attached to their cases and requesting them to prioritise their response accordingly.
- Arranging interpreters for people for whom English is not their first language
- Explaining each stage of the process in detail to witnesses.
- Providing support before, during and after court action. This may include arranging pre case court visits, arranging transport to and from Court, and maintaining contact after a court hearing.
- Using professional witnesses to give evidence on behalf of witnesses.
- Using professional witnesses to gather additional evidence to support a case.
- Using professional witnesses to provide evidence in support of witnesses/cases
- Using anonymous statements from witnesses.
- Liaising with Victim Support and other relevant agencies to provide additional support and/or counselling
- In extreme circumstances moving witnesses, either temporarily or permanently for their protection

NOTE:

No personal information regarding witnesses will be passed to any other agency without that person's prior permission.

Prevention, Intervention and Rehabilitation

When tackling ASB the overall aim of the Islington Strategic Partnership is to challenge the unacceptable behaviour and bring about real changes, without recourse to legal action wherever possible. If perpetrators can be deterred or prevented from ASB this is preferable to having to deal with the consequences of their behaviour.

Opportunities to prevent ASB from arising will be taken whenever and wherever they arise. Homes for Islington, in conjunction with our partners, will always have regard to the need to prevent and deter ASB in all aspects of our work. This may be the provision of alternative or diversionary activities or by the design and development of the environment so as to improve security and discourage ASB.

Where perpetrators of ASB show a willingness to address the underlying causes of their behaviour we will offer the assistance and support in this.

When approaching alleged perpetrators we will always give consideration to issues of vulnerability (e.g. If there are disability problems, if there are mental health problems, where there are drug/alcohol abuse problems etc.) Young people and elderly people may also be considered to be vulnerable because of their age or home and family circumstances.

Where such problems exist we will seek the intervention and support of other partner agencies to assist in addressing the problem behaviour.

At each stage of the process we will seek to keep perpetrators informed of action we intend to take and give them the opportunity to change their behaviour.

Many of the measures listed above in the Prevention, Intervention and Rehabilitation of this section are intended to assist with this, including interviewing the perpetrators and the issuing of warnings.

We will also, where appropriate, work with our partners to provide a range of prevention, intervention and rehabilitation initiatives. These may include:

- Utilising 'Designing Out Crime' opportunities, in particular through planned maintenance and improvement programmes.
- Promoting acceptable behaviour and educating children, young people, adults and communities on ASB, its impact on others, tolerance levels etc.

Utilising targeted response groups such as MAGPI or Police Safer Neighbourhood Panels to bring agencies together to tackle specific local issues. Making referrals to other agencies or specialist staff for intervention and support and in some cases the rehabilitation of perpetrators, including: -

- Mediation Services to assist with neighbour disputes
- Family Group Meetings
- Community Conferencing
- Housing Support Officers to assist people to manage their tenancies better
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Positive action for Young People who are causing ASB (e.g. Youth Inclusion Projects and other diversionary activities)
- Social Services
- Islington Primary Care Trust
- Children and Young Adults Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Education

We will participate and support projects and initiatives in this area and will continue to develop and take opportunities when they arise. This is not an exhaustive list and we will be flexible in our approach to working with our partners in providing a comprehensive range of initiatives.

However, when dealing with all cases of ASB, the needs of the community will always be our primary concern therefore, if these types of options have been tried and failed or are considered inappropriate we will seek to resolve the problem through taking enforcement action as outlined above.

Sharing Information

Homes for Islington acknowledge that we cannot operate in isolation. The issue of Anti Social Behaviour exists throughout the whole community and no one agency can be seen as holding or providing all of the answers.

We therefore work with a number of other agencies to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of our responses. This enables all the agencies to identify the most appropriate responses to issues. This also allows us to combine and co-ordinate our responses and to formulate a package of measures to tackle complex issues.

We will, where appropriate, share information with our partners (e.g. the Police) for the purposes of prevention and detection of Crime and Disorder (Crime & Disorder Act 1998).

We recognise that confidentiality is fundamental to developing a relationship of trust with those individuals who report anti social behaviour. We will guarantee therefore that the identity of the person who supplied the information will remain confidential, unless we have their permission to reveal it to the other agency.

All information will only be shared in line with the respective protocols outlined by the Islington Strategic Partnership.

15. Publicity

We recognise that a proven record of success in dealing with ASB cases is fundamental to building confidence in the service. Homes for Islington, together with our partners, will continue to enhance our reputation by publicising our successes and working with the media to encourage positive reporting of the way in which we are tackling ASB.

Positive reporting of our successes in tackling unacceptable behaviour will have a threefold effect:

- It will have a positive impact on the quality of life in our communities.
- It will build public confidence in the services we provide and will encourage people to come forward and report problems to us in the knowledge that we, as an effective member of the Safer Islington Partnership, will work to successfully resolve their problems.
- It will send a clear message to people who perpetrate or are considering perpetrating ASB that this kind of behaviour will not be tolerated and that action can and will be taken.

In order to do this effectively we will use a range of methods to publicise our success in tackling ASB, including:

- Press releases, to the local press, local radio and television.
- Resident newsletters
- Publicity Materials (e.g. advertising the services, posters and leaflets publicising the services, leaflets on ASBO cases etc.)
- Awareness Raising Sessions and Campaigns such as Community Safety Days
- Homes for Islington Website

16. Training

To ensure that we are able to fulfil all our commitments outlined in this policy, we will provide a comprehensive training programme to our staff.

The training programme will ensure all staff:

- Are aware of the issues surrounding ASB
- Understand the legislation surrounding ASB and the powers available to us
- Recognise the importance of dealing with reports of asb promptly
- Are able to record details of reported incidents fully and accurately
- Understand the need to pass the details to the appropriate member of staff promptly
- Are able to provide the victim with practical information, advice and support
- Are fully aware of the need to treat the reporter sensitively and confidentially.
- Understand and are sensitive to issues of diversity.

It will also ensure that staff who are responsible for investigating reports of ASB:

- Are able to effectively prioritise each report and deal with them appropriately
- Understand the need to act promptly and fully investigate a report of asb
- Aware of all the options available to them and are able to use these to deliver an effective, proportionate and timely response to problems.
- Are aware of the options available to support victims and witnesses and are able to utilise these effectively.

We will also strive to raise awareness of the issues surrounding ASB across Islington by providing training and briefings to Tenants and Residents Groups, Homes for Islington Board Directors, Councillors and other agencies/departments as may be required.