

Lambeth Housing Service

Mission Statement

'To ensure that all residents in Lambeth have the opportunity and choice to live in good quality affordable housing within strong, healthy and secure communities'

A crucial element in achieving our mission is the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour, which is why the housing department is committed to tackling these problems in partnership with the police and other partners.

Statement of Policy and Procedures on Anti-Social Behaviour **(Housing Act 1996, Section 218A)**

Part One - Policy

Introduction

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (Section 12), amending the Housing Act 1996, requires Lambeth Housing Services (LHS) to publish a statement of our policies and procedures in dealing with anti-social behaviour.

This Statement outlines Lambeth Housing Service's general approach to ASB, in recognition of the fact that measures taken to address problems of crime and ASB are continually changing, this statement will be regularly reviewed and updated taking on board the views and opinions of our residents and partners.

LHS approach to dealing with ASB incorporates recommendation resulting from an in-depth consultation process undertaken by the Nuisance Working Party between June and September 2003. It is also closely aligned to the Council's ASB strategy that was also developed following extensive consultation with tenants and leaseholders as well as other stakeholders.

The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to ensure the 'well being' of its residents, crime and ASB issues are often cited in resident surveys as the factors that adversely affect their quality of life.

1. Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour

Lambeth Housing Service uses the following definition:

'ASB occurs when behaviour by one household or individuals in an area threatens the physical or mental health, safety or security of another household or individual'

The 1998 Crime & Disorder Act defines ASB as an act that:

'causes or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not in the same household'

The Council's ASB strategy takes a broader approach, it states that:

‘Anti Social Behaviour creates an environment in which more serious crime takes hold. It can occur anywhere – in people’s homes and gardens, on estates, in town centres or shopping parades and urban or rural areas. It blights people’s lives, undermines the fabric of society and holds back regeneration.’ (ASB white paper ‘respect and responsibility’)

To illustrate what types of behaviour are anti-social, below are examples of ASB. This list is not exhaustive but will give an insight into behaviour that falls outside the terms and conditions of Lambeth Housing’s tenancy agreement and lease.

- Noise Nuisance
- Graffiti, vandalism and damage to council property
- Pets, including dogs barking and fouling communal areas
- Obstructing communal areas
- Cycling and use of skateboards on footpaths and balconies
- Nuisance from motorbikes and mopeds and joyriding
- Harassment
- Intimidation and threats, including from gangs congregating in public/communal areas
- Criminal activity, including drugs and prostitution
- Alcohol and solvent abuse
- Squatting
- Vehicles and parking
- Businesses, such as car repairs
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Littering and dumping of rubbish

2. Lambeth Housing Service’s Approach to Anti-Social Behaviour

Lambeth’s Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Strategy outlines the council’s policy in dealing with ASB, it states that:

‘The Lambeth Community Safety Partnership is determined to tackle the causes of ASB, which affect the quality of life for our citizens. We recognise the need to support individuals, families and communities, in taking a positive stand to prevent anti-social acts and will consider, in partnership, appropriate interventions which will have the maximum impact in tackling ASB’

In line with the Council’s policy, Lambeth Housing is committed to resolving cases of nuisance and anti-social behaviour (ASB) for our tenants and leaseholders using a victim centred approach.

LHS has the main responsibility for tackling ASB on its own estates and will work in partnership with other council departments and agencies to do this. This will be achieved by working with and supporting the Community Safety Officers based at the town centres and participating with the Case Review Panels. Responsibility for dealing with ASB at a local level lies with the Tenant Management Organisation or Area Housing Office.

LHS recognises that nuisance covers a wide range of behaviour, some of which may not constitute ASB in themselves but may be perceived to be intimidating. In such circumstances, where complaints are received, the Area Office, Tenant Management Office or Lambeth Service Centre will take early and appropriate action to respond to such complaints to prevent these from escalating into more serious ASB.

Early use of Lambeth Mediation Service, tenancy support (SNAP) team and other specialist services as well as intervention by housing staff will be used to resolve problems quickly, if possible.

Complex cases will be referred to the Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour Officers (NASBO) in area offices by tenancy Housing Officers or Lambeth Service Advisors.

Prevention of ASB will be a priority for LHS, as well as developing our own strategies we will work with and complement our partner's initiatives to deal with the causes of ASB.

Where appropriate, and particularly where a property is being used for criminal activities (such as drugs and prostitution) LHS will not hesitate to use enforcement measures available to ensure that ASB ceases, including the eviction of perpetrators of serious and/or persistent ASB.

In keeping with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, LHS will take account of crime and disorder reduction in all decisions it makes and functions it undertakes.

3. The Strategic Context

The housing service will contribute and complement the council's ASB strategic aim to:

'improve the quality of life, peace and enjoyment for people who live, work and visit our borough'

In order to meet this aim the strategy sets out five clear objectives: -

- i. **Intervention through support:** - To tackle anti-social behaviour by addressing the root causes of the behaviour through support and care where appropriate.
- ii. **Enforcement:** - To ensure that existing legislation is used in the most effective and swift manner.
- iii. **Supporting victims:** - To ensure that victims of anti-social behaviour receive support to address the behaviour and the impact on their lives.
- iv. **Preventing anti-social behaviour:** - To identify ways of ensuring that anti-social behaviour can be prevented from occurring.
- v. **Communication:** - A key part of delivering an effective service is ensuring that the community and service providers know what each other does, who does it, when and how they can access the service. Communicating our successes is vital in achieving our aim.

4. Obligations of Tenants

Area Offices and TMOs are responsible for the day to day running of council properties. They ensure that all tenants keep to the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreement.

All Lambeth tenants are subject to conditions contained in the Tenancy Conditions or the lease in the case of Leaseholders. All tenants will receive a copy of the conditions when they sign their tenancy agreement. Sections 21 and 22 specifically relate to issues of nuisance, harassment and ASB. The housing service also produces a tenants' handbook, which explains tenants obligations in plain and easily understood terms and is available on the council's website.

It is not intended to reproduce these in full in this statement. Under the conditions of the tenancy, our tenants have agreed:

- Not to cause a nuisance, or let their family, friends or visitors cause a nuisance by making excessive noise.
- Not to cause a nuisance, or let their family, friends or visitors cause a nuisance by harassing anyone
- Not to be involved in criminal activity
- Not to damage the property and return it to the council in a good state when they leave
- To dispose of their rubbish in the appropriate bins provided
- To be responsible for the good behaviour of their family, friends and visitors in their homes or on the estate
- To ensure that any pets the council has given them permission to have are kept under order and do not make a mess, cause a nuisance, or damage their home or the estate they live on
- To abide by the parking scheme on their estate and ensure that any vehicle used by them or their household is taxed and insured

5. Specific Policies

Support of complainants

LHS has adopted a victim centred approach in dealing with complainants of ASB. Action will be taken to ensure that complainants are made to feel secure and in extreme cases, where the police have confirmed that complainants are at risk of violence if they remain in their current accommodation, alternative accommodation will be made available.

In all cases, complaints of ASB will be dealt with in a prompt and courteous manner. Where further action is appropriate the case officer will keep the complainant up to date on developments.

LHS recognises that in many cases it will need to work with other agencies in order to provide support to complainants. In such cases referrals to appropriate agencies will be made.

Racial and harassment policies

All forms of harassment are unacceptable and LHS take them very seriously. We will thoroughly investigate all reports of harassment and if we have enough evidence to go to court we will take out an injunction (with power of arrest) against the harasser. We will evict any tenant who is harassing somebody or allows any member of their household, friend or visitor to harass somebody. LHS will ask for permission before they report any incident to the police. If a tenant is in danger because of violence and needs to be moved, housing officers will explain the choices available:

- register for an emergency transfer to secure accommodation;
- register as homeless.

We will not put up with any member of our staff harassing a tenant or a member of a tenant's household. The officer's manager in accordance with the council's disciplinary code will deal with any such harassment.

Domestic violence policy

Like other forms of hate crime, LHS will not tolerate acts of domestic violence and will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of victims.

The housing service will work with the Lambeth Domestic Violence Forum and Co-ordinator, the police and any other agency as required to resolve cases of Domestic violence.

If one of our tenants, their household or visitors is responsible for acts of Domestic Violence then LHS will take direct legal action such as securing an injunction and/or possession action. We will also work with the police to secure a conviction.

Prevention of ASB

As well as dealing with ASB using the appropriate measures available, LHS is also working to prevent ASB occurring or escalating. For example, to achieve this we:

- Adopted introductory tenancies in 1997. This means that all new Lambeth tenants must serve a probationary period of 12 months before they can become secure tenants and benefit from the range of rights available only to secure tenants.
- Financially support the Lambeth Mediation Service, which provides a community based mediation service. We make regular referrals to LMS and aim to refer ASB cases for mediation when initially reported.
- Participate in the borough's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership at many levels
- Work closely with the Police and other agencies such as Lambeth Crime Prevention service and Victim Support
- Subscribe to the Lambeth Information Sharing Protocol.
- Actively participate in the multi-agency case review teams.
- Invest in the improvement of security, environment and youth provision on our estates.
- Provide funding for warden schemes in the borough.
- Work with the Clapham Park NDC crime theme group
- Provide floating support to vulnerable tenants to assist them in keeping to their terms of tenancy and live independently
- Introduced Good Neighbour Declarations, which are voluntary agreements drawn up by residents, setting out the main principles to which they will abide.

- Ensure high standards of estate care; take prompt action to clear abandoned vehicles, fly tipping and graffiti.
- Ensure the fast letting of empty properties and swift action against squatters.
- Make use of Acceptable Behaviour Agreements

Rehabilitation of perpetrators

LHS recognises that in many cases the perpetrators of ASB are themselves in need of support, for instance where ASB behaviour is the consequence of:

- Drug abuse/dependency
- Alcohol abuse/dependency
- Mental health; and/or
- Disability

In accordance with the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995, we will work with Social Services, Health, the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) and other support agencies in order to meet the needs of vulnerable people and help them sustain their tenancies. To improve tenancy support LHS has established the Support Needs Assessment and Placement (SNAP) team. The team will be responsible for assessing individual housing-related support needs and for arranging Supporting People or other services to meet those needs. This could mean support to help a person sustain their accommodation or referral to supported accommodation.

LHS will aim to address issues of juvenile perpetration of ASB via the Case Review Team structure. Mentoring schemes and parenting programmes will be used to address family problems that may be leading to ASB. The main tool in this process will be the Acceptable Behaviour Agreement process, where young people will agree to amend their ASB with the council's support.

It should be noted that if the rehabilitation approach fails the council might resort to enforcement action such as possession, injunction or ASBO action.

Multi-agency partnerships

LHS participates fully with the Town Centre based ASB Case Review Teams in order to tackle and prevent ASB within a multi-agency framework. The Case Review teams comprise of:

- Police Inspector
- Housing Manager/s
- Registered Social Landlords
- Street Care Agents
- Neighbourhood Warden Managers
- Legal Services
- Educational Welfare
- Social Services
- Youth Offending Team Officers.

We will also work with appropriate agencies on a day to day basis in order to resolve individual cases.

Area Housing Managers will also hold monthly meetings with the Police Sector Inspector for their area. NASBOs will regularly meet with relevant agencies such as the Community Mental Health team and social services.

LHS will continue to work in partnership with legal services and the police in order to close properties where class 'A' drugs are being used, dealt or manufactured.

Working with other organisations managing local authority housing

We will support and work in partnership with all tenant management organisations (TMOs) that manage local authority housing.

We will ensure that TMOs take action against perpetrators of ASB in keeping with our policies and procedures.

Supporting witnesses

Similarly to victims of ASB we will support and ensure the security of witnesses. We recognise that successful action against ASB depends on:

- Residents providing information to council officers and the police
- Residents providing evidence to secure court orders/conviction against the perpetrators of anti-social and criminal behaviour

LHS also recognises that the best way to support witnesses is by taking swift and effective action.

We will work with the courts in order to ensure that serious cases of ASB are brought to court as quickly as possible. Under the terms of the Crack House Protocol the County Courts serving Lambeth Borough have agreed to hear cases within two weeks of an application and to arrange eviction within two weeks of securing outright possession.

The witness support process will also include:

- Regular contact
- Allocation of a specific case worker
- Updated information
- Witness protection
- Accompany and transport to and from court
- Access to witness suites

Professional witness schemes

Where appropriate LHS will use professional witnesses for the collection of evidence. Any covert evidence collection will be undertaken in accordance with the Regulations of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

We also use 'hearsay' evidence from housing officers and other council staff in support of county court injunction and possession action.

We work closely with the police and regularly use statements from police officers in support of legal action.

We will use all available sources in the collection of evidence, such as:

- The Council's noise control service
- Warden's
- Housing Officers
- Caretaking and concierge staff

Data protection and information exchange

Power under section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Data Protection Act 1998 allow agencies to disclose information for the detection and prevention of crime and ASB. LHS and the Council are signed up to Lambeth's Sharing of Information Protocol.

LHS will work closely with other council services and the police to develop, implement and manage an ASB database system.

All information exchange will be compliant with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Confidentiality

The identity of complainants or witnesses will only be disclosed to a third party with their expressed permission.

However, any information that cannot be linked to an individual may be passed to a third party if it will assist in the reduction of crime and disorder in the area.

Cross-tenure issues

LHS recognises that there are cases where our tenants and leaseholders may be the perpetrators or victims of ASB involving other landlords' tenants or owner-occupiers.

In such cases LHS will take appropriate action to resolve cross-tenure problems, including:

- Acceptable Behaviour Agreements
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO)
- Referral to mediation
- Referral to Noise Control Service
- Referral to Case Review Team
- Possession (where our tenant is the perpetrator)
- Injunction against either party

Training of staff in dealing with ASB

The training needs of staff dealing with ASB will be met through the council's staff appraisal scheme and personal development programme.

Human Resources provide the following courses on a regular basis:

- Housing Law, Introduction, intermediate and advanced.
- Neighbour Disputes
- Mental Health Awareness
- Working Together to Tackle ASB

The C&ANT nuisance team will provide training on Nuisance and ASB to all NASBOs at monthly meetings.

Specialist ASB staff will also attend relevant courses and conferences organised by the Social Landlord Crime and Nuisance Group (SLCNG) and the ODPMs Together Academy.

Access to the Race Action Net will also be made available to staff in order to keep up to date with the latest information and best practice ideas.

Information on relevant policies

As well as the policy and strategy documents referred to in this statement; the following is a full list of relevant policies and strategies:

Housing

- Housing Strategy
- Housing Service Plan
- Homelessness Strategy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Housing Allocations Scheme
- Private Sector Housing Assessment Policy
- Crack House Protocol

Other

- Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Lambeth Community Strategy
- Supporting People
- Alcohol Strategy
- Drugs Strategy
- Covert Surveillance Policy
- Racial incidents procedure

Part Two - Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this part of the statement is to provide guidance on what action we take when a resident or third party reports any form of nuisance or anti-social behaviour. This procedure provides a framework to deal with different types and degrees of incidents ranging from disputes and nuisance to serious anti-social behaviour involving Lambeth council tenants.

Local officers, Housing Officers and Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour Officers (NASBO), are responsible for determining what course of action is appropriate in the circumstances. Determining factors include the nature and seriousness of the incident and the victim's preferred course of action.

Serious and/or repetitive incidents of nuisance and anti-social behaviour must always receive immediate and sympathetic attention.

The responsibility for ensuring adherence to this procedure lies with the area manager and TMO lead officer in each office.

2. Who deals with complaints?

Housing officer – The Housing Officer has responsibility for ensuring that first time cases of nuisance/anti-social behaviour/harassment reported by Council tenants and leaseholders are dealt with according to the stages set out in the nuisance procedure. Housing officers are based in the area offices and TMO offices (Office contact details are listed in section 8 at the end of this statement).

Nuisance and Anti-social Behaviour Officer - The Nuisance and Anti-social Behaviour Officer will deal with any escalation of nuisance that may lead to legal action as well as taking on more complex cases. They are responsible for ensuring that housing officers manage cases appropriately and give advice and support as needed. Each area office has one or two NASBOs.

Environmental Health Services (Noise Control Officers) – This service provides a rapid response night-time noise patrol service for anyone living or working within the borough. The service can be contacted on 0207 926 5999 between Sunday and Thursday: 10pm – 3am; and between Friday and Saturday: 10pm – 5am.

Noise disturbance reports can also be made during normal office hours, Monday to Friday: 9am – 5pm by telephoning 0207 926 6111. It is important that officers witness noise nuisance from within the complainant's home if enforcement action is to be taken under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. People who commit serious noise nuisance will be taken to court and may receive a fine of up to £5,000 and receive a criminal record. The housing department for possession action may use evidence collected by this service.

3. How to make a complaint and our response

Complaints can be made in writing (letter, fax or email), over the phone, face to face or via a third party. Complaints made in writing should be addressed to the NASBO in each area office or the TMO lead officer as the case may be.

The standards we will apply when we deal with your reports of nuisance will follow the guidelines detailed below:

- a. Written complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days and an appointment made to meet with the complainant within 10 working days or sooner if it is a serious matter.
- b. Complaints made via the telephone will be made to the Lambeth Service Centre. Calls will be transferred to the appropriate housing officer. The officer who deals with the call should complete a Nuisance Report Form and an interview must be set up within 2 working days, if appropriate.
- c. In cases where the nuisance affects you in your home, or if you are unable to attend the office, we will always arrange to visit you in your home. This visit will be arranged within five working days of your complaint and will form part of the initial investigation.

- d. Within 15 working days of meeting the complainant we will draw up an action plan which will let you know what we propose to do to assist.
- e. We will contact you on a regular basis, as set out in the action plan, to check on how you are and whether action taken has been successful or not.
- f. Once the problem has been solved we will let you know that your 'case' is closed and we will ask you to tell us how well you felt we did in responding to you problem.

The seriousness and /or complexity of a case will have a bearing on these guidelines. However, we will keep you informed of progress and any deviation from these standards.

Anonymous complaints will not be ignored. Complainants may be reluctant to provide their details due to intimidation or fear of reprisal. Housing officers will assess the seriousness of the complaint and if necessary send a general letter to residents encouraging people to come forward, providing reassurances of confidentiality.

Whatever the source, all reports of nuisance and anti-social behaviour will be recorded on the Nuisance Monitoring Form by the NASBO and details passed on to the appropriate Housing Officer for investigation.

Completing the Nuisance Monitoring Form is essential for monitoring purposes. Information on this form is passed on to the Crime and Anti-Nuisance Team for collation into borough-wide Key Performance data.

4. Processing a complaint

Investigation

When a complaint has been received, the Housing Officer must proceed to gather as much relevant information as possible. This will include a written acknowledgement of the complaint as well as a face to face interview with the complainant. The interview should provide the following information as well as advice:

- Who the complaint is about
- Times and instances of nuisance
- How long the nuisance has occurred
- How severe the nuisance is
- How the nuisance affects the complainant/complainant's household
- What action has been taken by the complainant
- Possible witnesses
- Action/involvement of other agencies (e.g. police, social services)

Advice to be given at this stage will include:

- What action, if any, LHS will take following the interview
- Explaining LHS nuisance procedure
- Detailing any involvement of external agencies
- How the complainant should log complaints on the NDS (if necessary)

If it is clear that a condition of tenancy relating to nuisance has been breached, LHS will offer appropriate support and contact relevant agencies where necessary. Immediate action must be taken to minimise any nuisance and attempt to resolve the situation at the earliest possible stage.

If it is decided that no breach of tenancy has occurred, the housing officer will advise the complainant verbally and in writing and provide advice on how they could deal with the issue themselves. A report of the complaint and the decision must be documented and placed on file for reference. This will support any future enforcement action that may become necessary.

If, at the end of the interview, the victim does not wish LHS to take any action against the perpetrator(s), even when known, their wishes should be respected. The housing officer should confirm whatever action is agreed in writing following the completion of investigations.

Interviewing the perpetrator

Following the initial interview with the complainant, if it is evident that further action is necessary, then with the consent of the complainant, the housing officer will arrange to interview the alleged perpetrator. The Housing officer will send a letter to the alleged perpetrator outlining the report of nuisance and confirming a date and time for interview.

All the facts of the allegations will be clearly put to the alleged perpetrator and they must be given an opportunity to respond. Any discrepancies or counter allegations should also be looked into. Whilst the interview is an opportunity for the alleged perpetrator to give their version of events, the housing officer will, where appropriate, make them aware of the potential consequences of their actions, including the ultimate sanction of eviction.

By the end of interviews/investigations, the Housing officer should be in a position to inform the complainant in writing what action has been taken to date and any future action necessary.

Following the interview with the alleged perpetrator the Housing officer should have all the necessary information to be in a position to form a view on what action if any is required. If further action is necessary, the housing officer must agree an action plan with the complainant outlining what action LHS will take. This action plan should be confirmed in writing and signed by both the Housing officer and the complainant.

If the allegations are denied and no additional evidence exists to support the complainant, then no further action can be taken at this stage apart from emphasising the need to comply with tenancy conditions and have consideration for their neighbours. Mediation may be proposed as a way forward.

If there is sufficient supporting evidence to show that the complaint is justified and that the perpetrator has breached their tenancy agreement, they must be told to stop and warned that a Notice of Seeking Possession will be served if the nuisance persists. They should also be warned of other legal action that could be taken against them. The complainant must also be written to advising them of the outcome and asked to continue to keep records should any further problems occur.

If the nuisance is in the form of noise e.g. loud music, the complainant should be advised to contact the Noise Control Team, Environmental services and to keep the housing office informed.

The alleged perpetrator may make counter allegations and this should be put to the complainant. If it appears that it is a dispute rather than serious anti-social behaviour, then the housing officer may consider referring both parties to mediation. If both parties refuse mediation, then they should be written to advising that the situation will be monitored and should the allegations be substantiated then possible legal action may be taken.

If serious allegations continue to be made, but insufficient evidence exists to substantiate them then it might be appropriate to use a "professional witness" e.g. private investigator, Environmental Health or the Police. Members of staff can also be witnesses and can give hearsay evidence.

Case Management & Action Plan

The precise course of action to be followed is dependent on the circumstances of the case and in particular, on the following:

- The outcome desired by the tenant and what is achievable.
- What type of action the person can deal with, with support.
- Whether the alleged perpetrator is a Council tenant.
- Whether criminal or civil proceedings are to be taken (options may include Injunctions, Possession, ABAs, ASBOs)
- What external agencies are involved.

The options for inclusion in the *action plan* include:

- Involvement of mediation services
- Referral to the Town Centre Case Review Team for multi-agency action.
- Minor maintenance works to alleviate noise transference
- Issuing a warning letter to the alleged perpetrator confirming that any further incidents will lead to formal proceedings
- Drawing up an *acceptable behaviour agreement* with the perpetrator
- Applying for an antisocial behaviour order against the perpetrator
- Taking possession proceedings against the alleged perpetrator or seeking an injunction order,
- Supporting the tenant in their own legal action against the alleged perpetrator
- Supporting police in legal action against the alleged perpetrator
- Involvement of statutory agencies such as Environmental Health Department.
- Publicising the action being taken to deter others

The views and opinions of the person suffering nuisance/ASB will be respected even if it differs from what LHS would like to do. There will be circumstances where LHS has to take action other than that agreed. If this is the case the Housing officer or NASBO will inform the complainant in writing.

The NASBO will review all cases monthly and revise action plans as necessary, updating the Nuisance Monitoring Form (NMF) accordingly.

5. Witness/Victim Support

Regardless of the type of action plan agreed upon, the person suffering nuisance/ASB is likely to need extra support. Each Area Office, with the NASBO as the lead officer, must compile a list of agencies/groups, which could help. These could include social services, victim support groups, women's groups, and substance misuse teams. The NASBO will maintain close liaison with these groups and establish any referral requirements in line with LHS policy.

In the most serious cases, we may consider moving complainants and witnesses to another area within or outside the Borough. The Emergency Match-list Panel will consider whether a move to alternative accommodation on management grounds is appropriate. Such a request will need to be supported by the police.

Where complainants and witnesses are giving evidence in person, the Council will consider the following options if a move to alternative accommodation is not considered necessary, or is not requested by the witness or complainant:

- Additional security e.g. locks, lighting, alarms.
- Access to counselling or similar support.
- Increased officer presence or security patrols in the area (police, neighbourhood wardens, and council operatives).

Additional support can also be offered to witnesses including transport to court hearings, travelling expenses, access to translation services and other reasonable expenses.

The Housing Officer must write monthly to the complainant to provide updates on progress on the case.

6. Support Options – Legal & non-legal actions

Mediation

If it is felt that the nuisance complaint constitutes a dispute rather than nuisance, or that the nuisance does not exist and that further action would not be successful, mediation should be suggested to the parties involved.

Housing officers should not attempt to act as mediators in disputes between tenants – for mediation to be successful it is important that the mediator is seen as independent with no historical or potential future involvement in the case. The housing officer should discuss the possibility of mediation with both parties and obtain their agreement before proceeding further. However, a mediator may be able to visit a reluctant party and discuss what a mediation service may be able to offer.

Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABA)

This is a written agreement that normally requires that a person must not continue with certain identifiable acts that could be considered to be anti-social behaviour. The agreement is not legally binding but can be referred to in court proceedings as evidence that staff have attempted to amend the person's behaviour. The ABA will contain certain specific agreements/statements that the perpetrator has made with LHS.

Where the offender is under 18 years of age, a Parental Control Agreement (PCA) will be signed, agreeing to control the future conduct of their children.

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO)

This is a civil preventative order which can be made under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for Local Authorities and the Police and extended to Registered Social Landlords under the provisions of the Police Reform Act 2002 to deal with persistent nuisance, harassment and criminal behaviour.

Injunctions

This may be made as well as or instead of an ASBO. An injunction can be obtained through the County Court and can be used either to make somebody do a particular thing, or more usually, to prevent somebody doing a particular thing. Injunctions may also be made to prevent unlawful use of housing accommodation owned by the landlord.

The Court may add a power of arrest to an injunction and if an injunction is broken then the guilty person may be fined or even imprisoned.

Introductory and Demoted Tenancies

Most new Council tenants, unless they have been secure tenants of other landlords, are given an introductory tenancy for a period of 12 months. If they break their conditions of tenancy the Council can obtain a Possession Order from the County court using a different procedure to that used for secure tenants.

If a secure tenant or a member of their household or visitor is carrying out anti-social behaviour, the Council can apply to the county court for a Demotion Order. A Demotion Order has the effect of making the tenancy similar to an introductory tenancy. At the end of the demoted tenancy period, if there has been no further anti-social behaviour, the tenancy reverts to a secure tenancy. However if there is another breach of tenancy conditions or an act of anti-social behaviour, then the Council can apply to the county court for possession, using a similar procedure to that for introductory tenants.

Possession Proceedings

The Council can apply to the County Court for a possession order. An order may be outright or suspended, and may be immediate or for a particular period. The Court's decision will be based on the evidence given by the Council officers and any other witnesses.

A suspended order means that the tenant cannot be evicted unless they break the terms of the order – so, for instance if the anti-social behaviour stops, the tenant will remain. An outright order means that the tenant will be evicted. Tenants have rights to request a "stay" or postponement of eviction, which the courts may grant if they wish.

The NASBO in each area housing office will lead on any cases that might require legal action.

Eviction

In the event of a forthwith order being granted or further anti-social behaviour following a suspended order being obtained, we will apply to the Courts for a warrant of execution to evict the tenant.

7. Monitoring ASB and the service

LHS monitors complaints received from and about Lambeth Council tenants on a regular basis. This is done mainly from the centre by the Crime and Anti-Nuisance Team. In addition we monitor the number of:

- Cases referred to and taking up mediation
- Acceptable Behaviour Agreements agreed with LHS tenants
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders served on LHS tenants
- Injunctions obtained against LHS tenants
- Demotion orders obtained
- Possession orders obtained against LHS tenants on grounds of anti-social behaviour
- Evictions carried out on grounds of anti-social behaviour.

Furthermore, to help us determine how effective our policy and procedures are, we will measure the following:

- Percentage of tenants who consider the following to be a problem
 - noise from people
 - drug dealing
 - problems with neighbours
 - vandalism
 - dogs
 - graffiti
 - harassment
 - other crime
- Percentage of tenants very or fairly satisfied with the way their complaints was handled
- Percentage of tenants very or fairly satisfied with the area as a place to live.

These figures will be gathered as part of a Tenant Satisfaction Survey, which will be carried out regularly (**every two years**) and will be published on our web-site.

8. Directory of Contacts

Area Housing Offices

The following is a list of Lambeth Area Housing Offices, located across the borough:

Brixton Area Housing Office

2-7 Town Hall Parade, SW2

Clapham & Stockwell Area Housing Office

283-291 Wandsworth Road, SW8 2ND

North Lambeth Area Housing Office
91 Kennington Lane, SE11 4HQ

Norwood Area Housing Office
Cranfield Close, SE27 9NR

Streatham Area Housing Office
139 Albert Carr Gardens, SW16 3HB

Office hours: Monday to Friday – 09.00 am to 5.00 pm
Saturday – 10.00 am to 1.00 pm

All Area Offices can be contacted via the Lambeth Service Centre

Phone: 0207 926 6000 – Monday to Friday - 08.00 am to 8.00 pm
Saturday & Sunday - 10.00 am to 4.00 pm
Bank Holidays - 10.00 am to 4.00 pm
(excluding Christmas Day)

Lambeth Service Centre offers a language line - **phone: 020 7926 6660**
Lambeth Service Centre offers a vulnerable tenant line - **phone: 020 7926 6270**

<u>Tenant Management Organisations</u>	<u>Office Hours</u>
Angell Town EMB Crowhurst Close, Angell Town Estate, SW9 Phone: 020 7926 8820	9am – 5pm
Blenheim Gardens RMO 24 Prague Place, SW2 5ED Phone: 020 7926 0158	9am – 5pm
Cedars TMC 27 Cedars Road, Cedars Estate, SW4 0PN Phone: 020 7926 7555	9am – 5pm
Cottington Close TMC 2 nd Floor, 1 Opal Street, SE11 4HZ Phone: 020 7926 8105	9am – 5pm
Cowley EMB 147 Brixton Road, SW9 6LZ Phone: 020 7926 0690	9am – 5pm
Ethelred TMO 20 Lollard street, SE11 6US Phone: 020 7926 8361	9am – 5pm
Holland Rise TMC Holland Rise Hse, 95 Clapham road, SW9 Phone: 020 7926 0310	9am-5pm

Holland Town TMC

91a Brixton Road, SW9 6EE

Phone: 020 7926 0670

9am – 5pm

Loughborough EMB

Opp. Ashby Hse, Loughborough Est, SW9

Phone: 020 7926 8800

9am – 5pm

Metra Housing Co-op

1 Magdalen Lodge, Drewstead Road, SW16

Phone: 020 8677 4534

9am – 5pm

Myatts Field North

40-41 Foxley Square, SW9 7RX

Phone: 020 7926 8345

9am – 5pm

Penwith Manor EMB

1 Opal Street, SE11 4HZ

Phone: 020 7926 8310

9am – 5pm

Roupell Park RMC

Brockham Drive, SW2 3RY

Phone: 020 7926 0219

9am – 5pm

Stockwell Park EMB

143 Stockwell Road, SW9 9TP

Phone: 020 7926 5320

9am – 5pm

Thorlands EMB

63 Lilford Road, SE5 9EB

Phone: 020 7926 6610

9am – 5pm

Waltham RMO

Thornicroft House, SW9 9PT

Phone: 020 7926 9081

9am – 5pm

Wellington Mills TMC

24 Mead Row, Kennington Road, SE1 7JG

Phone & Fax: 020 7633 0255

9am – 5pm

General Contacts

Alcohol & Drug Services

Alcohol Recovery Project provides support and advice for tenants who may be in danger of losing their property because of alcohol abuse.

Telephone

020 7403 3369

Kennington Support Group

020 7735 6217

Camberwell Green Support Group

020 7708 2865

Drugline (24 hour information and advice)

020 8767 8711

Legal Advice

ALIVE (Advice and Legal help in Violent Episodes)
48 hour injunction service free of charge

020 7928 0500

North Lambeth Law Centre
Advice Line

020 7582 4425

Rights of Women
Advice line

020 7251 6577

Noise Control

You can contact the service on **020 7926 5999** between Sunday and Thursday 10pm – 3am and on Friday and Saturday 10pm - 5am. You can also phone **020 7926 6111** between office hours Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm.

Crime and Anti-Nuisance Team

This team works closely with Area Housing offices and TMOs to give advice and support in dealing with problems of nuisance and anti social behaviour.

Telephone

020 7926 3626/7/8

Lambeth Mediation Services

Telephone (answer-phone outside office hours)

020 8678 6046

Email servicemanager@lambethmediationservice.org.uk

Housing Support Team

You can contact your area housing office to make a referral or contact the Housing Support Team direct on:

020 7926 4292

Domestic Violence and Abuse

If you or someone you know is suffering from domestic violence, neglect, or physical or sexual abuse, you can contact Social Services emergency number on:

020 7926 4200

Or call the Police

Victim Support Lambeth

Victim support offers free, confidential help, advice and support to victims of crime living in Lambeth. You can contact the group on

020 7820 0007/8

Streetscene

Lambeth Streetscene Agents handle a number of street care issues including rubbish and abandoned vehicles. You can contact a street-scene agent on **020 7926 9000** email: streetcare@lambeth.gov.uk or visit their website www.lambeth.gov.uk/services/transport-streets/street-care-cleaning/ for more information.

Grimebusters (Graffiti Removal)

020 8769 7905

Dog Control Service
Recycling

020 7926 8860
020 7926 2624

Police Services

The Lambeth Metropolitan Police have their own 'Community Safety Unit', staffed by police officers trained to deal with domestic and hate crimes.

For advice telephone **020 8649 2065** between 8am and 6pm (answer-phone service after hours) or visit their web-site at www.scotlandyard.police.uk/csu.lambeth.htm

Brixton Police Station	020 7326 1212
Cavendish Road Police Station	020 8673 8989
Clapham Police Station	020 7498 1212
Gypsy Hill Police Station	020 8670 1212
Streatham Police Station	020 8678 1212
Vauxhall Police Station	020 7261 1212
Crime Stoppers	0800 555 111

In an emergency, always telephone 999

9. Abbreviations

ABA	Acceptable Behaviour Agreement
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order
C&ANT	Crime & Anti-Nuisance Team
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Action Team
EMB	Estate Management Board
LHS	Lambeth Housing Service
NASBO	Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour Officer
NDC	New Dew for Communities
NMF	Nuisance Monitoring Form
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PCA	Parental Control Agreement
RIPA	Regulations of Investigatory Powers Act
RMO	Resident Management Board
SLCNG	Social Landlord Crime and Nuisance Group
SNAP	Support Needs and Placement (Team)
TMC	Tenant Management Co-operative
TMO	Tenant Management Organisation