

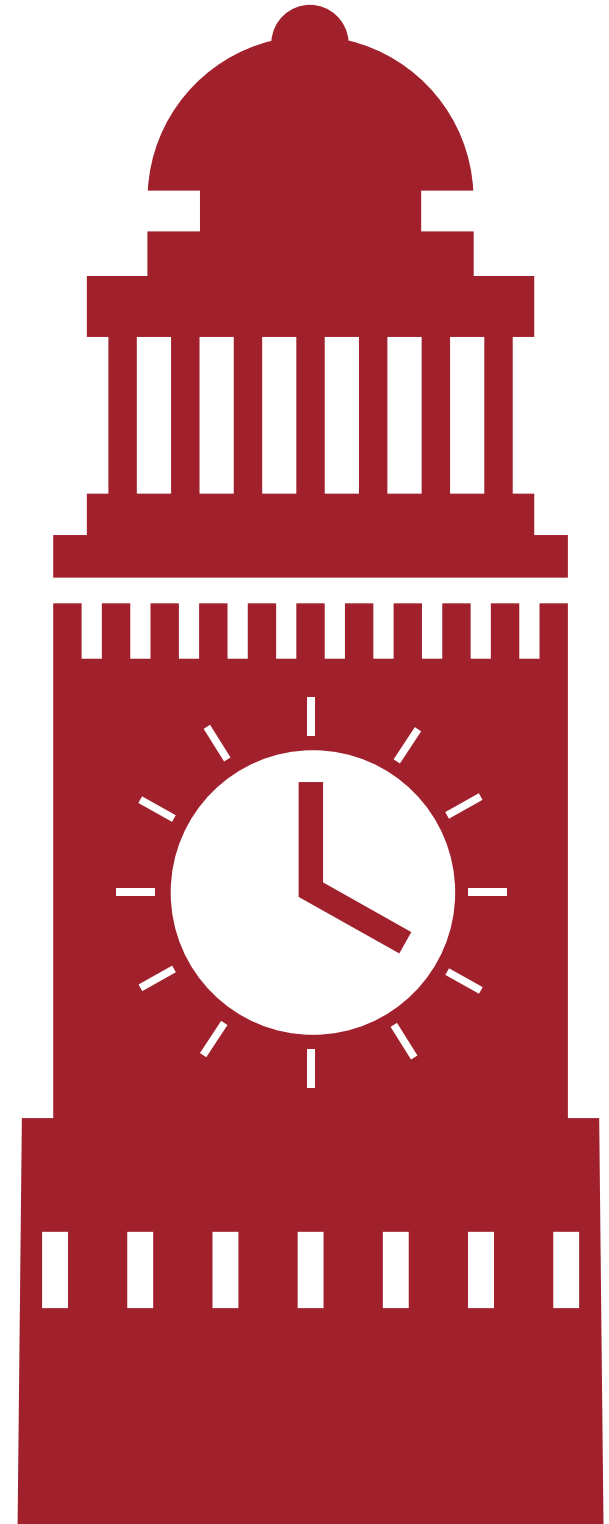
Housing Service Antisocial Behaviour Strategy **2014 to 2017**



Stamping out Antisocial behaviour

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Foreword

The Council wishes every person to be able to quietly enjoy their home, noting that everyone has a right to their own chosen lifestyle, providing that this does not spoil the quality of life of others. This implies in some cases a limited degree of tolerance of and respect for the requirements and needs of neighbours.

Cases of antisocial behaviour (ASB) will be dealt with in the appropriate manner taking action which is considered suitable to each individual case. Reporting of antisocial behaviour is actively encouraged and will be acted on in an objective and non judgemental fashion.

In keeping with this statement and commitment, the housing service has developed an ASB Strategy. The strategy will run for three years from 2014-2017, and be the basis for the ASB Action Plan, which will detail the plans to meet the objectives outlined in this document.

Our aim is to:

- Listen to our tenants
- Work to identify and respond to the concerns of our tenants at a local level using community engagement opportunities.
- Work with the community to find long term sustainable solutions to the most persistent ASB hotspots.
- Address commonly raised problems, such as ASB associated with houses in multiple occupation.

Challenge the behaviour of perpetrators

- Use appropriate action which deals effectively with ASB including tenancy enforcement.
- Have a wide range of staff trained in dealing with ASB and associated powers.
- Use timely interventions (such as Acceptable behaviour Contracts, Injunctions) to their full potential to make sure that perpetrators are dealt with quickly and firmly.

Support victims and witnesses

- Improve the satisfaction of service users.
- Continue to work with repeat and vulnerable victims to reduce risk
- Improve the support given to victims
- Work with Courts to make sure that victims and witnesses are supported through the Court process.

Identify and respond to the causes of ASB and hate crime

- Provide a range of services that meet the various needs of families and prevent young people getting involved in ASB.
- Work with drug and alcohol services to meet the needs of local people.
- Joined up work around preventing young people becoming involved in gangs and accessing support for people who want to leave gangs.
- Provide a range of positive activities for young people that help develop skills of resilience and build community cohesion and self-esteem.

This strategy sets out how we plan to achieve this.



Introduction

In 2013, Barking and Dagenham Safer and Stronger Select Committee agreed a number of key priorities to improve how housing dealt with complaints of anti-social behaviour. Public consultation constantly places ASB at the top of local priorities, alongside violence. That it is the most common priority chosen by ward-based Safe Neighbourhood Panels demonstrating its importance for our tenants and how it impacts on their perceptions of their safety.

Outcomes

The key outcomes from the delivery of this strategy in 2017 will be:

1 Fewer calls to the housing service and Police reporting ASB.



2 Increase the percentage of tenants who are satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with by the housing service.

3 Improved casework and case management. Including the recording of ASB and the IT solutions used. service.

4 Reduce the percentage of people who think there is a problem with people not treating each other with respect and consideration in their local area.

5 Continued investment in preventative physical security measures that discourage ASB.



6 Improved communication between all officers, departments and agencies including the police to provide a partnership approach to dealing with ASB.

Definition of antisocial behaviour

We define antisocial behaviour as:

- Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person and directly or which indirectly relates to or affects the housing management functions of the Council.
- Conduct which consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation owned or managed by the Council for an unlawful purpose. (ASB Act 2003-Nuisance and annoyance)

Some acts of ASB are deliberate, with the person(s) responsible being aware that their behaviour will have a negative effect. Some forms, however, can happen as a result of a lack of consideration or awareness of the impact of certain acts, or because of conflicting, but legitimate, lifestyles.

To allow us to focus on the impact of ASB and our support victims we divide it into three categories known as the **PEN approach**:

Personal - designed to identify ASB incidents that the caller, call-handler or anyone else perceives as either deliberately targeted at an individual or group or having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large.

Types of behaviour that fall into this category include:

- Hate related incidents and crime
- Violence
- Criminal damage including arson
- Verbal abuse
- Harassment

Environmental - deals with the interface between people and places. It includes incidents where individuals and groups have an impact on their surroundings including natural, built and social environments.

Types of behaviour that fall into this category include:

- Street drinkers
- Drug use and its effects.
- Trespass
- Nuisance from vehicles



Nuisance - those incidents where an act, condition, thing or person causes trouble, annoyance, inconvenience, offence or suffering to the local community in general rather than to individual victims.

Types of behaviour that fall into this category include:

- Noise Nuisance
- Drug dealing or cultivation of drugs
- Prostitution
- Criminal damage to public buildings
- Pets not being kept under appropriate control

As well as the PEN approach there are also two other sets of behaviours to be aware of:

1. Criminal behaviour which is also listed above will be dealt with as such but as a partnership. We may also use specific ASB tools and powers (including legal action) to reduce the effect of this behaviour on local communities.

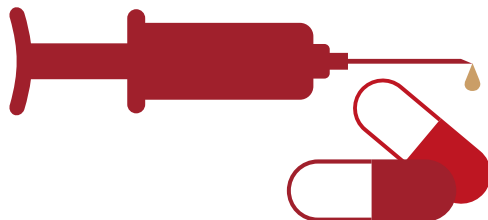
Types of behaviour that fall into this category include:

- Drug dealing or cultivation of drugs
- Threat or actual use of violence
- Criminal Damage
- Hate Crime

2. Unwanted behaviour is behaviour that is unwanted and viewed as unacceptable by the person experiencing it (the complainant).

The Council does not consider behaviour in this category to be 'antisocial behaviour,' so legal action is unlikely to be appropriate, but services such as mediation are still offered to help resolve this type of complaint and to manage the complainants expectations. Types of complaints that fall into this category include complaints about:

- Cooking smells
- Normal living noise (for example, hovering and D.I.Y)
- Children playing
- Fencing or boundary disputes
- Parking issues when there are no parking regulations being broken



Links to other strategies, policies and plans

There are a number of national, regional, and local documents that have influenced the development of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's ASB Strategy, these are identified as follows:



National policy and strategy documents

Although there is no national policy or strategy on ASB, definitions, tools, and powers in relation to it have come into being and been developed through the following pieces of legislation:

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Police Reform Act 2002
- Antisocial behaviour Act 2003
- Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008
- ASB Crime and Policing act 2014 (Effective from October 2014)
- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1996
- Housing Act 2004
- Localism Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010

Regional policies, strategies and plans

There is no London wide ASB strategy though the Mayor of London has made it clear that localised issues are of importance and this has been emphasized by the continuation of Safer Neighbourhood Policing and a focus from the Mayor's Office on 'low level crime', for example the use of alcohol on public transport and a focus on dogs and irresponsible ownership.

Local policies, strategies and practices

- Conditions of Tenancy-London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
- Health and Well Being Strategy- Barking and Dagenham Partnership
- Barking and Dagenham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Children and Young People's Plan (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham)
- Older People's Strategy (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham)
- Community Cohesion Strategy (Barking and Dagenham Partnership)
- Safeguarding Adults Board Strategy (Barking and Dagenham Partnership)
- Licensing Policy (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham)
- Housing ASB Policy and Procedure (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham)

Principles of this strategy

This strategy's priorities and actions for tackling ASB are based on the following fundamental principles:

- There should be opportunities for everyone to live the lifestyle that they choose as long as this does not negatively impact on others. A person or group is not necessarily acting in an antisocial way solely because they have a different lifestyle.
- Where disputes arise due to difference in lifestyle or culture, these must be dealt with sensitively and appropriately, and support given to communities to help them to work together to find solutions.
- That tenants and the wider community are kept informed of the action taken to deal with ASB in their area.
- That there is effective consultation with individuals, groups, and the wider population in the development of programmes and initiatives designed to tackle ASB in the Borough.
- A resident centred approach is taken when delivering services.
- That evaluation and monitoring against objectives are key elements of all initiatives, and of the overall strategy.
- That effective partnership-working is fundamental to the delivery of services to tackle ASB in the borough.
- That the partnership's services are always good value for money.



Local context

ASB in the borough – anti-social behaviour is a key concern for our tenants. This is shown through the volume of calls to police and Council teams and through its continued focus at both Safer Neighbourhood Ward Panels and Member Surgeries.

- During the period of April 2010-March 2013 the housing service received 2369 calls complaining of ASB.
- Analysis indicates that the most common form of ASB reported to housing service is noise. Which was 31 percent of all calls received
- The second most common form of ASB reported to the housing service was harassment and intimidation
- From 2010 to 2013 calls to the housing service reporting ASB increased by 30 percent
- Significant increases in ASB have been seen in litter, fly-tipping and drug misuse and dealing.
- Reports of Domestic Violence to the housing service have reduced.
- In the 2012/13 period the majority of ASB incidents were reported to the police (51 percent), followed by Environment and Enforcement services (37 percent), then Housing (8 percent) and then the councils ASB team (4 percent).
- 2012-2013 ASB Cases Dealt with: 1310 Average time to deal with ASB Case 20 days
2013-2014 ASB Cases Dealt with: 1148 Average time to deal with ASB Case 16 days.
Reduction of four days in turnaround time.
- Since 2012 the Council funded Police Estates Team have made over 1,000 Arrests including: Burglary 39 Arrests, Robbery 31 Arrests, Drugs related 177 Arrests, Motor Vehicle Crime 56 Arrests.
- Since 2010 we have taken out 54 ASBOS and we currently have 20 live ASBOS as of 21/2/2014.
- Since May 2013 we have taken out 15 ASBIs (Antisocial Behaviour Injunctions). This includes three taken out by council officers on their own without the use of solicitors for the first time.
- ASB evictions:
2012-2013 was 8 and 2013-2014 was 8.

Procedures and actions

As a promise to our tenants we will make contact with any tenant complaining of ASB within two working days in all cases (unless Category A in which case it will be within 1 working day please see table below) to establish the nature of the complaint and arrange an interview so that a risk assessment can be completed.

We will discuss what actions we can and are prepared to take and will agree an action plan with the complainant confirming how they will be kept updated and by what preferred means; phone, mobile, e-mail, and agree on the frequency of updates; weekly, fortnightly.

Category	Type of behaviour	Timescale for initial interview
A	Actual Physical Violence/Assault Arson Domestic and/or Sexual Abuse Hate Crime Threat to Life	Within one working day
B	Aggressive, Abusive Behaviour Harassment Drugs - Selling/ Use of Alcohol - Misuse of Noise - Sustained/ Excessive Prostitution (Sex Litter) Vandalism Nuisance - Neighbours, Youth Disorder	Within five working days
C	Ball Games Pets Noise - Random/ Living	Within 10 working days





Courses of action available:

Having visited the complainant, any witnesses, the other party and after considering any other evidence that exists, we will decide on the appropriate course(s) of action and advise the complainant. Generally, we will, depending upon the issues, consider the following actions:

- a. In case of counter allegations further investigation should be carried out
- b. Monitoring (use of ASB Diary Sheets, encouraging reporting)
- c. Referral to Victim Support
- d. Referral to Safer Homes
- e. Consult with ASB Coordinator
- f. Case Review with appropriate professionals and agencies (making sure notes of the review are recorded and evidenced on Capita)
- g. Mediation, Community Mediation, Restorative Justice which can be supported by the ASB Team
- h. Good Neighbour Agreement-For all parties to sign in a neighbour dispute.
- i. Acceptable Behaviour Contract/Parental Contract Agreement-For perpetrator/ parent or guardian to sign.
- j. Formal letter listing acceptable and unacceptable behaviour expected by the Council (if previous two actions are refused)
- k. Letter drop to encourage reporting in the wider community of ASB
- l. Estate visit with Police to reassure tenants and encourage reporting
- m. Written warning to other party in accordance with Conditions of Tenancy
- n. Refer to the monthly ASB Standing Case Conference attended by Police/ Legal/ YOS and other agencies, in order to agree a joint approach. As a result of this a multi agency action plan will be agreed to deal with the matter and advise the complainant accordingly.
- o. Interview other party on council premises with other agencies present: Police and support services.
- p. Joint visit with Police- Where potentially criminal activity reported and/ or concern for safety.
- q. Where not specifically a 'housing' issue refer to the appropriate agency.

- r. Where the nuisance is severe, involves witnessed threats of violence or violence itself then consideration must be given to the possibility of obtaining an injunction as an immediate response. Where this is considered appropriate the responsible officer should fill out a legal action justification form and discuss with senior housing officer/manager and ASB Coordinator.*
- s. Where circumstances are appropriate (e.g. the perpetrator is under 18 or is due to be convicted of a criminal offence) we will seek to obtain an ASBO.*
- t. Witness Service for any witnesses who may need to attend court
- u. Other legal remedy for secure tenants, serving of Notice of Seeking possession, demoted tenancy application
- v. Environmental Improvements - lighting, security cameras, removal of planting
- w. If the perpetrator is an introductory tenant we will consider sanction of extending of introductory tenancy following separate process and if the nuisance is severe serve Notice of Possession Proceedings on introductory tenant.

*In both these instances the law will be changing in October 2014 when the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014 comes into effect. We will amend as appropriate at that time. We will be mindful of confidentiality when meeting with any complainant or other party and only refer them to other agencies if they give their permission for us to do so. The exception to this rule is if the officer feels that an adult or child is at immediate risk and needs to raise a safeguarding. If there is any doubt the officer should speak to their manager or the ASB Coordinator.

On completion of all actions we will review the case to make sure that any problem has been resolved satisfactorily and contact the complainant to advise of the results of all actions taken, advise who to contact for any further incidents and agree that we are closing the case down. Outcome letter from Capita will either be sent in post or preferably e mailed to complainant listing agreed actions and results including how to complete the online ASB satisfaction survey.

Monitoring, valuation, and review

Like all strategies, success depends on regular and robust monitoring and review to ensure that the intended outcomes are being achieved and action is taken to address service failings, or any other problems that arise.

We will monitor our progress on a monthly basis by reviewing the amount of satisfaction surveys returned to us and how many of those are satisfied responses.

Throughout the life of this strategy the monitoring, evaluation, and review will be undertaken by the Housing Management Team (HMT).

Equality and diversity

The intention of this plan is to ensure that services which respond to ASB are equally accessible to all sections of the community.

As well as stimulating participation by under-represented groups, it is proposed that work will continue to encourage increased participation by those groups in society who are already well represented.

It is recognised that equal opportunity requires targeted positive action, and, in line with the vision for this strategy, actions will be taken to encourage all residents in the Borough to take part in the engagement structures in place, so that their views can be heard and responded to.

The strategy will support the setting of targets for identified groups and recommend that plans and programmes are developed in consultation with group representatives.

The training of people and capacity building within communities will be a key feature of this development work.



The purpose of this strategy

Outcome	For LBBD Housing to continue to improve how it deals with and responds to reports of ASB from tenants.
Vision	For every tenant to be able to enjoy their home, noting that everyone has a right to their own chosen lifestyle, providing this does not spoil the quality of life of others.
Aims	Objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify and respond to the concerns of our tenants around ASB.2. Challenge the behaviour of perpetrators of ASB.3. Provide quality support for victims and witnesses.4. Work as a partnership to identify and respond to the causes of ASB.	<p>By 2016 we will have achieved the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A reduction in the number of calls reporting ASB.2. An increase in the number of victims who are satisfied with the how their ASB complaint was managed by Housing.3. An increase in the number of people who think that Housing are successfully tackling the crime and ASB issues that matter.4. A reduction in the number of people who think that people do not treat each other with respect and consideration.

The following action plan, over the next few pages, covers the period April 2014 to March 2016.

ASB Scrutiny: Housing service improvement implementation action plan



Focus area	Actions	Outcomes	Success measures	By when	Led by
Continued investment in preventive physical security measures that discourage ASB.	Continued provision of local area Environmental Improvement Budgets. Continued contribution to security measures such as CCTV monitoring and the corporate ASB Team above the share expected on a pro-rata basis, ensuring that all residents benefit. Continue Capital investment in physical measures, such as door entry. Ensuring estate renewal schemes are designed according to the principles of Secure by Design.	Fewer cases of reported ASB in estates where preventive measures have been introduced and estates have been redesigned. Residents have the opportunity to identify appropriate local improvements. Local improvements are co-designed with residents.	Increased percentage of residents satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. Reduced annual spend on repairs due to ASB.	Ongoing	Divisional Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods
Consideration of the impact of mixed tenure housing provision as part of the upcoming Sheltered Housing review.	Ensure the upcoming Sheltered Housing review takes into account the finding of concentrations of ASB within mixed housing provision of specific older peoples housing and general needs.	Sheltered housing is sympathetically designed and located in the borough.	Percent of sheltered residents satisfied with the Council as a landlord.	Complete	Group Manager of Housing Strategy
Develop the Housing Management Group for Registered Social Landlords with property in the borough, with a particular focus on ASB.	Work with Registered Social Landlords with property in the borough to enable more effective information sharing and partnership work on practical, day to day issues.	Council meets with RSLs on a regular basis to ensure effective partnership work in dealing with ASB, demonstrating commitment to resolving problems of ASB in the borough.	Increased percentage of residents satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator

Focus area	Actions	Outcomes	Success measures	By when	Led by
Enable the different housing organisations to share the key issues of ASB they are experiencing.	Establish a programme of meetings to facilitate exchange of advice and experiences.	Council meets with RSLs on a regular basis. RSLs are invited to monthly Standing Case Conference to address issues of ASB involving their properties.	Increased percentage of residents satisfied with the Council as a landlord.	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator
Review and build on the estates policing approach.	Ensure the appropriate tasking between Housing and Police officers. Use learning from the success of this approach so far to explore ways of to further its effectiveness.	Monthly monitoring and information sharing meetings between estates police and Management teams. Weekly visits to housing offices by Estates Team Officers for intelligence sharing. Improved communications on a daily basis between states Team and Housing including joint working.	Increased % of residents satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator
Support the introduction of a mandatory private sector landlord licensing scheme.	Implementation of a private sector landlord licensing scheme in the borough.	All properties in the borough are managed to a high quality.	Increased percentage of residents satisfied with their neighbourhood.	Complete	Divisional Director of Environment

ASB Scrutiny: Housing service improvement implementation action plan



Focus area	Actions	Outcomes	Success measures	By when	Led by
IT solutions should be investigated to improve case management.	<p>Investigate IT solutions to improve the consistency of reporting ASB cases.</p> <p>Identify a solution to enable case visibility across services, specifically exploring the possibility of providing all Housing Officers with access to FLARE/Civica APP.</p>	All housing officers log ASB consistently, with the new ASB position within Housing ensuring this.	<p>Increased percentage of residents satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint.</p> <p>Decreased average number of days for resolving ASB cases</p>	May 2015	ASB Coordinator
Improved communication and case management.	Develop routine monitoring reports from the noise team to Housing. Renew service level agreement between the Housing and Noise Team and between Housing and the Corporate ASB Team.	Housing, environment and noise officers have visibility of real time case information.	Multi-agency performance management is in place.	Complete	ASB Coordinator
Council fully participates in the benchmarking reporting for ASB related services.	Subscribe to the ASB element of the benchmarking report produced annually by Housemark	Barking and Dagenham Council's Housing Service fully participated in House Mark's ASB benchmarking report. National benchmarking comparison data is used to inform future service design. Robust and meaningful ASB data is collected. Council uses the results of benchmarking to target prevention and performance improvement.	<p>Increased percentage of residents satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint.</p> <p>Increased percentage of residents satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. Increased percentage of residents satisfied with the Council as a landlord.</p>	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator

Focus area	Actions	Outcomes	Success measures	By when	Led by
Review case management procedures.	Develop a combined risk assessment and action plan process to be implemented by housing officers. Investigate the out-of-hours arrangements for dealing with ASB, using the new ASB position as a link between Housing, the Police and out-of-hours work. Review information provided to tenants on ASB at sign up. Review the case closure procedures for ASB complaints, incorporating the resident satisfaction surveys.	There is consistency in the Service with regards to communication, and tenants have a consistent level of expectation. Complainants are satisfied with the level of communication they receive after they report an incident of ASB. Fortnightly one-to-one case reviews between housing officers and seniors, and divisional performance monitoring responsibilities for the new ASB position. Culture change regarding ASB management within the housing division.	Decreased percentage of Introductory tenancies extended as a result of ASB. Increased percentage of residents satisfied that they were kept informed.	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator
Review the approach to the collection of satisfaction surveys.	Investigate the different options available for collecting satisfaction surveys, including the use of face-to-face surveying, online surveys, social media, telephone surveys and texts.	Satisfaction surveys are collected on all closed ASB cases.	Increased percentage of closed case survey responses.	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator

ASB Scrutiny: Housing service improvement implementation action plan



Focus area	Actions	Outcomes	Success measures	By when	Led by	
Implementation of key service improvement suggestions that were provided by the Chartered Institute of Housing.	Introduce a new position within Housing to oversee ASB case management processes.	Consistency in Service delivery between departments.	Increased percentage of closed case survey responses.	Complete	ASB Coordinator	
	Provide training to housing officers on tackling ASB complaints, including both legal and interpersonal aspects of ASB case management.	All Housing officers are competent at ASB case management.	Increased resident satisfaction.	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator	
	Adopt the Chartered Institute of Housing's Respect Charter.	Adopting a Nationally recognised standard of ASB service provision.	Demonstrate accountability for ASB management.	Complete	ASB Coordinator	
	Sign up to the Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group, and ensure it is made available to all Housing Officers and Members.	Sharing and learning from best practice and influencing National initiatives.	Resident satisfaction with ASB case management. Increased percentage of residents satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaints.	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator	
	Ensure that victims attending court are provided with the sufficient support.	Victims feel supported in participating in legal processes of tackling ASB.	Residents are satisfied with the Council as a landlord	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator	
	Develop procedures for both making referrals to Social Services, and for receiving feedback from Social Services on cases that have been referred.	All housing officers understand the needs of the complainants and their risk of harm, and take the appropriate measures to safeguard those at risk.				
	Promote positive action through the local press, the Council website, notice boards and tenant and resident forums.	Appropriate publicity of action taken against ASB perpetrators.				

Focus area	Actions	Outcomes	Success measures	By when	Led by
Implementation of key service improvement suggestions that were provided by the Chartered Institute of Housing.	Make sure that complaints are used to inform the improvement of the Service.	Residents understand that ASB is not tolerated, are aware of how to report ASB, and are confident that Barking and Dagenham Council are effectively tackling ASB.	Increased percentage of residents satisfied with the Council as a landlord and satisfied that their views are taken into account.	Ongoing	ASB Coordinator
Implement bespoke training for housing officers, with regards to the reforms anticipated within the Bill.	<p>Provide a briefing to housing officers on new legislation.</p> <p>Organise a Members' training session on ASB, to ensure that there is a common understanding of the definition of ASB and the options available for dealing with it.</p>	<p>All Housing officers understand changes defined under new Legislation.</p> <p>All Members are briefed on the Council's policies regarding what constitutes ASB, and what actions are available depending on the type of ASB at hand.</p>	Increased resident satisfaction with ASB case management.	October 2014	ASB Coordinator/ Service Improvement Officer.

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Phone: 020 8215 3000

Out-of-hours emergencies only
Phone: 020 8215 3024
Fax: 020 8227 3470
Email: 3000direct@lbbd.gov.uk
Website: www.lbbd.gov.uk

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