

Anti-social Behaviour

Introduction

This fact sheet is about complaints about anti-social behaviour. It should be read together with our '[How to Complain](#)' webpage, available on the 'Making A Complaint' tab.

Councils have a wide range of duties and powers in relation to anti social behaviour occurring within the community and must work with other organisations such as the police to address such problems. Some behaviour may constitute a crime and should be dealt with by the police. As landlords, councils and housing associations have specific duties to address anti-social behaviour within the properties they manage. There are certain specific actions that only they can take (e.g. possession proceedings if the behaviour breaches the terms of the tenancy agreement). Anti-social behaviour can include excessive noise, harassment, verbal abuse, threats and vandalism.

What we can do

We can look at whether there is something wrong in the way that the council or housing association dealt with complaints of anti-social behaviour. This can include failure to:

- have proper procedures in place to guide staff as to how to record, investigate and monitor cases of anti social behaviour;

- explain to complainants what their procedures are and how complaints will be recorded and investigated;
- give consideration to all of the options available to bring the behaviour under control or to consider the full range of legal sanctions that could be used;
- work in conjunction with other agencies such as the police to address the problems;
- provide support to the victims of anti social behaviour, keep them informed and consider taking steps to protect their safety;
- deal with the person causing the problem in a timely manner. We think that most cases should be resolved within three months but cases involving racist abuse or physical threat should be given a higher priority.

What we cannot do

We cannot:

- normally, look at failings that occurred more than twelve months ago and where the nuisance has ended;
- look at concerns you may have but have not as yet brought to the attention of the organisation responsible. You should give the council or housing association a chance to resolve matters before you complain to us.

Issues to bear in mind

It is helpful if you keep a record of when the nuisance started, what form it took and when you brought these problems to the attention of the responsible body together with any correspondence you received in return, including emails. We will ask for this information and for your account of events to help us decide whether to investigate your complaint.

Further information

There are a number of organisations which give guidance to public bodies on dealing with anti-social behaviour. Some of the key ones are:

The Home Office: <https://www.respect.gov.uk/>

The Chartered Institute of Housing: <https://www.cih.org/>

The Welsh Local Government Association:

<https://www.wlga.wales/anti-social-behaviour>

We are independent and impartial. We cannot order public bodies to do what we recommend – but, in practice, they almost always do.

Examples of cases that we have looked at can be found on our website, under the 'Publications' tab on the '[Our Findings](#)' page.

Contact us

If you are unsure whether we would be able to look into your complaint, please [contact us](#) on 0300 790 0203 or ask@ombudsman.wales

Also available in Welsh.

Easy Read

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