

O&S Task & Finish Group Scoping Paper

Topic: Antisocial Behaviour in Social Housing

Parent Committee: People O&S

Committee Meeting: July 2025

Membership.

Voting Members: 3 Lab, 1 Green, 1 Con, 1 Independent. Non-voting members: Anyone with an interest in this issue may be co-opted on to the TFG. Any non-executive member can sit on a task & finish group.

Terms of Reference.

ToR to be agreed by People O&S committee.

Definition.

Antisocial behaviour is defined as 'behaviour by a person which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to persons not of the same household as the person' (Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003 and Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011).

There are three main categories for antisocial behaviour, depending on how many people are affected:

1. **Personal antisocial behaviour** is when a person targets a specific individual or group.
2. **Nuisance antisocial behaviour** is when a person causes trouble, annoyance or suffering to a community.
3. **Environmental antisocial behaviour** is when a person's actions affect the wider environment, such as public spaces or buildings.

Under these headings antisocial behaviour falls into 13 different types:

- Vehicle abandoned
- Vehicle nuisance or inappropriate use
- Rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour
- Rowdy or nuisance neighbours
- Littering or drugs paraphernalia
- Animal problems
- Trespassing
- Nuisance calls
- Street drinking
- Activity relating to sex workers or sex working
- Begging
- Misuse of fireworks

Council housing is housing that is owned by the local authority and is intended for those with the highest need. Councils have a duty to house those in need under housing law.

There are criteria that need to be met for those who are accepted for council housing. Each individual council will have its own allocation scheme with categories which you will need to fall into to be able to rent a council property.¹ Brighton & Hove City Council makes clear that any council tenant committing antisocial behaviour is putting their tenancy at risk.

A Housing Association is a not-for-profit company which provides housing for those on low income or who need extra support. These will also have their own allocation criteria to be able to help those who most need it. Housing Associations also offer other types of housing options including shared ownership and low-cost ownership. Council properties tend to be cheaper to rent than Housing Association properties on average as housing associations tend to set their rents at either social or affordable rates.

Councils may work with Housing Associations to enable residents on the council's housing waiting list to apply for Housing Association properties. Housing Associations may work with councils to build properties specifically for this reason. Brighton & Hove has entered into such agreements with Guinness Partnership and Hyde Housing.

As of March 2024,² Brighton & Hove City Council has 12,039 council homes and a further 2,218 leasehold flats in council blocks. Data from 2021 said that there were 6,665 Housing Association homes within the city.³

In the year to March 2024 council officers responded to 675 new cases of antisocial behaviour. This figure does not include antisocial behaviour in housing association homes or instances reported directly to the police with no council involvement.

The Issue.

Antisocial behaviour in social housing can have significant impacts on the lives of other residents, even if the behaviour is not directed at them. Particularly in blocks of flats the problem is increased by shared access to properties and communal areas such as corridors, car parks or gardens.

When residents are having to deal with antisocial behaviour, as described above, at or around their home they often feel that they cannot escape from it as the perpetrator is a neighbour who they see regularly and who knows where they live. This may cause anxiety about reporting issues for fear of making the issue worse.

Anecdotally, councillors have reported being regularly contacted by residents about antisocial behaviour caused by their neighbours in housing association or council properties.

Residents reporting these issues are not just concerned about the antisocial behaviour itself but the way it is dealt with and the timeframe in which it is resolved.

Guinness Partnership's 2024 annual report showed that among those living in low-cost rental accommodation only 62.1% were satisfied with their handling of antisocial behaviour. The number of antisocial behaviour cases per 1000 homes managed by Guinness Partnership was 88.6, with the number involving hate incidents 0.1 per 1000 homes.

¹ BHCC's allocations policy can be found here <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/housing-allocations-policy>

² <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-07/Housing%20Annual%20Report%202024.pdf>

³ Brighton & Hove Strategic Housing Market Assessment Aug 2023 <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Brighton%20%26%20Hove%20SHMA%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf>

Satisfaction figures were lower for Hyde Housing at 57.1%, although the number of antisocial behaviour complaints per 1000 homes was lower at 40.2, the number involving hate incidents was 0.6.

For 2023/24 Brighton & Hove City Council housing residents' satisfaction in dealing with antisocial behaviour was: Very satisfied 26%, Fairly satisfied 29%, Neither satisfied or dissatisfied 9%, Fairly dissatisfied 13%, Very dissatisfied 23%. The number of antisocial behaviour cases per 1000 homes for Brighton & Hove City Council properties was 56.1 in 2023/24, with the number of cases involving hate incidents at 2.8 per 1000.

Housemark, a data insight company used by Brighton & Hove City Council for comparison with other social housing providers gave Brighton & Hove City Council satisfaction in dealing with antisocial behaviour of 55%, compared with 48% for Other similar sized local authorities, and 58% for All types of social landlord.

Potential areas of enquiry.

- Current policies and procedures used by local Housing Associations and BHCC for dealing with antisocial behaviour to learn the current situation locally.
- Best practices across the country for local authorities and Housing Associations would help to find ideas that could be put forward in recommendations.
- Guides or recommendations for dealing with antisocial behaviour by national trade associations.
- Lived experience of council tenants highlighting the impact of antisocial behaviour.
- Academic research on the issue.

Potential witnesses.

- Local Housing Associations such as Guinness Partnership and Hyde Housing who work very closely with BHCC. Do they have local data of number of incidents and outcomes such as BHCC produces? What are their policies and procedures for dealing with antisocial behaviour?
- Other less prominent local Housing Associations. Do they have local data of number of incidents and outcomes like BHCC produces? What are their policies and procedures for dealing with antisocial behaviour?
- Other Housing Associations from outside of the city demonstrating best practice. What policies and procedures are working well? What have they removed that wasn't working well?
- BHCC Housing. What are BHCC doing to reduce antisocial behaviour and improve outcomes?
- Other local authorities demonstrating best practice. What policies and procedures are working well? What have they removed that wasn't working well?
- Residents of social housing. What is their lived experience of antisocial behaviour in social housing?
- Representatives of Residents and Tenants Associations/local housing panels. What are their experiences of antisocial behaviour? What do they think would help reduce antisocial behaviour or improve outcomes?
- BHCC cabinet members responsible for housing and community safety.
- Sussex Police. Do they have local data on the reporting of antisocial behaviour and outcomes in social housing and the surrounding area? What do they think could reduce antisocial behaviour?

- National trade bodies such as National Housing Federation. Do they have guidelines or policies on antisocial behaviour?
- Academics (preferably local if possible) that have carried out research on social housing and antisocial behaviour. What does their research show, does it propose any policies that can reduce antisocial behaviour?