

A GUIDE

to Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour



We use the term 'resident' to describe anyone living in one of our homes or receiving one of our services. This includes tenants, leaseholders, shared owners and those people living in supported or sheltered accommodation.

Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour

This leaflet explains how Cosmopolitan Housing Association will assist you if you complain to us about Anti-Social Behaviour. If you have any questions we will be pleased to discuss them with you.

Policy Statement

Cosmopolitan condemns all forms of conduct, which can be termed “Anti-Social” on the basis that this type of behaviour adversely affects the quality of life of those touched by it. We are committed to preventing, deterring and tackling all such problems from any areas affected, and we will use all means at our disposal to do so in a manner that is proportionate to each case. Where appropriate we will stress the importance of conciliation in less severe cases but recognise that ultimately prompt and severe action may be required, which may include legal action and. At all stages of the process we will fully co-operate with relevant partners to prevent, deter and tackle anti-social behaviour.

We will ensure that all existing and future residents are given a firm message that anti-social behaviour by residents, members of resident’s households or invited guests is unacceptable. They will be made aware of their obligations under their tenancy agreement. This message will also be delivered through service leaflets, newsletters, the Association website and other publications

We will take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to Anti-Social Behaviour, Harassment, Racial Harassment, Domestic Violence, Hate Incidents, Hate Crimes and other forms of nuisance, and will at all times offer advice and assistance to those who allege to be suffering from any form of anti-social behaviour.

There is an extensive range of tools available to Registered Social Landlords, which comprise of both non-legal and legal remedies. The Association will always endeavour to resolve issues using non-legal methods where appropriate. However, where Anti-Social Behaviour involves severe criminal activity or where non-legal remedies have failed to resolve the issue, the Association will not hesitate to take legal action.


Respect

The respect drive aims to ensure that local agencies tackle unacceptable behaviour and its' causes to improve the quality of life for residents. The Association has signed up to the Respect Standard for Housing Management confirming its commitment to combating the causes and effects of unacceptable behaviour in our communities. More details are available upon request from our Tenancy Management Team on **0151 224 0203** or you can log on at: www.respect.gov.uk

Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-Social Behaviour can be described as interference with a person's use or enjoyment of their land or property or with their health, comfort or convenience. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Racial Harassment
- Hate Crimes and Incidents

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- A vertical close-up photograph of a woman's face, showing her eye and part of her nose, positioned on the left side of the page.
- Sexual Harassment
 - Actual violence
 - Domestic violence
 - Harassment
 - Criminality (affecting the housing function)
 - Drug production/supply in Cosmopolitan property
 - Dangerous dogs (including those used for intimidation)
 - Persistent noise nuisance (including shouting and arguing, playing loud music or TV and having parties)
 - Vandalism
 - Drug use, drug smells etc
 - Verbal abuse
 - Alcohol related nuisance
 - Prostitution
 - Intimidation
 - Criminal damage to Cosmopolitan property

Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour

The simplest way to report Anti-Social Behaviour is to phone, e-mail, write to or call in at your local Cosmopolitan office. Alternatively, you can ask a friend, relative or other representatives to report the problem for you. We will contact you to confirm that we are looking into your complaint.

If you need to report a serious incident of anti-social behaviour outside of the normal office hours (9am - 5pm Monday to Friday) you can ring our out of hours reporting service on **0808 100 2578**, where your report will be logged. Your report will be logged and passed to a member of the Tenancy Management Team the next working day who will make contact with you direct to discuss your problem in more detail.

Confidentiality

All contact is confidential and will remain so unless consent is obtained. However, this sometimes means the action we can take is limited.

Our Response

If the problem is something that we, as a Housing Association, may not be able to resolve, we will initially provide you with advice on either how to resolve matters yourself or will put you in contact with a specialist agency who may be better equipped to resolve matters for you.

Some examples of instances where we would ask you to speak with the person causing the problem yourself or where we may refer you onto a specialist agency include:

- Inconsiderate car parking issues
- Minor “one off” incidents of neighbour nuisance such as a party or noise
- Fly tipping/litter (not on Cosmopolitan land) or graffiti (if none offensive)
- Animal nuisance (noise and fouling)
- People walking across wooden floors
- People using washing machines
- Children falling out with each other
- General living noise between hours of 8.00am and 11.00pm
- Cooking smells
- Noise of children playing in or near their home (e.g. balls games)
- Talking to the person/s causing the problem.

If the person/s behaviour does not involve threats,

violence or harassment, then we will always recommend that you to talk over the problem with them. There is always more chance of resolving a problem if the other person can see your point of view. Sometimes a neighbour may be unaware that their behaviour is upsetting you or just needs reminding. As a good neighbour yourself, it is important to be reasonable in understanding the other person's point of view and accepting the different lifestyles of others. For example, you do not have to put up with regular noisy parties that go on until the early hours of the morning, but tolerating a one off event, especially if you have been told about it beforehand, may not be an unreasonable expectation.

However, if you do talk to the person/s causing the problem and they are unreasonable, just walk away and let us know. Do not get involved in an argument.

Mediation Services

If you feel uneasy about approaching the person/s causing the problem on your own, we can set up a meeting for you and can be there to discuss the problem with you and your other person/s.

Alternatively, specialist mediation services can be used, whose expert advisers will help you to reach a solution you are both happy with. Your 'Tenancy Management Officer can give you more information about mediation services.

If the problem is something we can deal with

Often, things are not so simple and if your complaint is of a serious nature we will need to talk to you before we can start an investigation. We will need to assess whether or not your complaint is Anti-Social Behaviour and if so whether it is serious or very serious.

Some examples of what the Association would deem as serious or very serious anti-social behaviour

include;

Very Serious

- Racial Harassment
- Hate Crimes and Incidents
- Sexual Harassment
- Actual violence
- Domestic violence
- Harassment
- Criminality (affecting the housing function)
- Drug production/supply in Cosmopolitan property.

Serious

- Dangerous dogs (including those used for intimidation)
- Persistent noise nuisance (including shouting and arguing, playing loud music or TV and having parties)
- Vandalism
- Drug use, drug smells etc (in or around Cosmopolitan property)
- Verbal abuse
- Alcohol related nuisance
- Prostitution
- Intimidation
- Criminal damage to Cosmopolitan property

Next Step

If your complaint is classified as Anti-Social Behaviour by the Association then depending on the seriousness of your complaint we will either;

Meet with you within 24 hours for complaints which relate to very serious Anti-Social Behaviour



Meet with you within 5 days if your complaint relates to serious anti-social behaviour

The meeting will take place wherever it is convenient for you - at your home, in the area office or elsewhere.

To help us get a full picture, we will ask some simple questions about the problems you are experiencing.

For example:

- What is the nature of the Anti-Social Behaviour or nuisance?
- Where/When, does it happen?
- Who is affected by it and how?
- Why do you think the person responsible is acting in an anti-social way?
- Have you tried to resolve matters yourself?
- Are there any other agencies involved?

We may need to speak to other people in your household who have been affected as well as any witnesses to the incidents you have reported.

Action Plan

At the end of the meeting, we will agree an action plan of further steps that need to be taken by both yourself and us to resolve the problem. This may involve actions such as:

- The collection of evidence by you, one of our Tenancy Management Officers or using alternative evidence gathering methods
- A diary of incidents kept by you
- The Tenancy Management Officer visiting the person/s causing the problem
- Referring your case to other agencies/authorities, which may include the

Police, Social Services, Support Agencies and Mediation Service

- Issue warnings to the person causing the problem
- Monitor the situation
- Take legal action (only when very serious and when non legal remedies have been tried and failed).

It is important that you undertake the actions you agree in the plan as well as the Association undertaking ours. Without your help, we may not be able to find a solution to your problem.

Gathering Evidence

Obviously, we cannot take action against another person without hard evidence. The most important evidence is an 'incident diary' and a 'Witness Statement'. The 'incident diary' that we will give you will allow you to record all incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour that you see or hear. You may need to fill in the diary over a period of time, so that enough evidence can be gathered to make a case for further action. If it is decided to take legal action, we will take a 'Witness Statement' from you. This is a statement from you, in your own words, which fully explains what happened who was involved, how you felt and the affect the incidents have had on your life.

We may need to collect other evidence too, such as photographs or recordings of the incidents happening. We may be able to do this ourselves, but if the incident happens suddenly, it may be best if you do it.

We may also have to speak to other people who have witnessed the problem, such as your neighbours. It may be difficult to take a case further without other

witnesses. Your neighbours might be asked to fill in an incident diary of their own to provide supporting evidence as well as take a 'witness statement' from them.

Dealing with the Person/s causing the problem.

If the problem is not some thing we can quickly resolve, and when all of the necessary evidence has been collected, we will decide if the person causing the problem has a case to answer and if so, we will take action. In very serious cases, where there is a real threat to you or another person's safety, we will take immediate legal action.

However, in most situations, we will take a more step-by-step approach to try to get the person to change their behaviour.

We will need to interview the person causing the problem (you can tell us not to do this, but it could then be difficult to take the case further). We will challenge them about their behaviour, warn them that we will take firm action if they do not change and offer the relevant support if it is obvious that they need help in order to conduct their tenancy in an acceptable manner.

Legal Action

As a last resort (or where there is an imminent threat to you or someone else's safety, or non-legal actions have failed to resolve the matter) we will consider taking legal action. This could involve us seeking one or more of the following against the person/s causing the problem:

- Injunctions

- Demotion of Tenancy
- Undertakings to the court
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders
- Abatement notices (in conjunction with other Agencies)
- Evictions.

For more information on how we:

- Support victims and witnesses of Anti-Social Behaviour
- Deal with Harassment
- Deal with Domestic Violence
- Deal with Racial Harrasment and Hate Crimes
- Support perpetrators (those causing the problem) of Anti-Social Behaviour.

Please see our Service Leaflets, which are available upon request or via our website

www.cosmopolitanhousing.co.uk



If you wish to have this document translated into your chosen language, please tick the relevant box below and return to Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool, L3 2BY.

This document is available in large print, Braille and audio tape on request.

<p>إذا لڊك الرغبة في الحصول على هذه الوثيقة مترجمة إلى اللغة التي تختارها، أرجو ان تضع علامة على الصندوق وترجعه إلى هيئة إسكان كوسموبولتان. Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool, L3 2BY.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Arabic)</p>
<p>如果您想把这份文件翻译成中文，请在空格内划✓，然后把传单寄回：Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool, L3 2BY</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Chinese – Simplified)</p>
<p>如果您想把這份文件翻譯成中文，請在空格內劃✓，然後把傳單寄回：Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool, L3 2BY</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Chinese – Traditional)</p>
<p>ئەگەر هەز دەهەیت ئەم دۆکیومێنتەت بۆ سەر زماڤی خۆت بۆ وەرگیرێت ئەوا تکایە نیشانەت ✓ لە چوارگۆشە بەدو بیگەرتنەوه بۆ (کۆمەڵە) کوسمۆپۆلیتان بۆ خانووبەرە) بۆ ئەم ناوێشانە: Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool, L3 2BY</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Kurdish)</p>
<p>Jeśli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać tłumaczenie tego dokumentu w wybranym języku, prosimy odhaczyć okienko i odesłać do: Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool, L3 2BY.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Polish)</p>
<p>Haddii aad jeclaan laheyd in documentigan luqad aad dooratay lagu soo turjumo, fadlan sax sanduuqa oo u soo celi hey'adda guriyeynta ah ee Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool, L3 2BY.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Somali)</p>
<p>Bu belgenin seçtiğiniz dile tercüme edilmesini arzu ediyorsanız, lütfen kutuyu işletleyin ve Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool, L3 2BY adresine geri gönderin.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(Turkish)</p>

Please be aware that Cosmopolitan Housing Association may record any incoming or outgoing telephone calls as part of our commitment to providing excellent customer service.



Cosmopolitan House, 2 Marybone, Liverpool L3 2BY,
Telephone: 0151 227 3716 Fax: 0151 227 4991
www.cosmopolitanhousing.co.uk

Cosmopolitan Housing Association is a Charitable Industrial and Provident Society.

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