



BURY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
IN RELATION TO ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

**PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 218A OF THE HOUSING
ACT 1996, AS AMENDED BY THE ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003**

November 2004
(amended April 2005)

IMPROVING SERVICES- DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Copies of this document are available on the Council's website
www.bury.gov.uk

Copies are also available in large print, Braille and audio cassette on request.
Please contact the address below if you require a copy of the document in
another format.

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SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF POLICY & PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Introduction

We know that anti social behaviour is one of your major concerns. You told us in the 2003 STATUS survey that litter, rubbish and vandalism on estates are issues for you. Tackling anti social behaviour is one of our key priorities, as we have highlighted in our business plan and housing strategy. We have designed our policies on anti social behaviour to help us achieve those priorities.

We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour and recognise the important role we can play in tackling it. We support the wide range of legal and preventative measures that are available to the Council and the police to address the issues of anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance.

We define anti social behaviour as behaviour which causes harassment, nuisance, annoyance, distress, harm or fear and which affects someone's life or the environment they live in.

Our tenancies are managed by Six Town Housing, an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) set up for the purpose. Properties on the Springs estate in Bury are managed by Springs tenant management organisation (TMO). Both organisations will take complaints and deal with cases by using the procedures which the Council has established.

What the statement covers

Our policy and procedure statement explains

- how we deliver, link to and support key Council strategies, aims and priorities
- how we will support the Government's agenda for tackling anti social behaviour
- the general principles that we have adopted for dealing with anti-social behaviour
- good practice and the way we provide the service
- the key people involved and their responsibilities.
- the procedures our staff use to take and investigate complaints
- the legal options available to enforce anti social behaviour
- the key agencies that can offer assistance; and
- how we measure our success in dealing with anti social behaviour (performance indicators)

It sets out how we will support the Government's agenda for tackling anti social behaviour and the important contribution we can make towards achieving the Council's aims and priorities.

Here is a summary of our policy and procedure statement

Strategy & Policy Framework

- Our policies complement existing legislation for dealing with anti social behaviour
- Our policies link to and contribute to the Council's Crime & Disorder Reduction strategy.
- As a tenant, you are responsible for your own behaviour, the behaviour of all people living in or visiting your home and for any pets.
- We expect you to be a good neighbour and not to cause nuisance or annoyance.
- As a good neighbour you should tolerate and understand the different lifestyles of other people living nearby
- We provide support to encourage you to complain about anti social behaviour. We will
 - deal with complaints promptly
 - keep you informed on progress with your complaint
 - agree an action plan to deal with your complaint and review it regularly as the case progresses
 - work with and support groups of people involved in complaints
 - provide help and advice
 - make referrals to other agencies who can help where appropriate e.g. police, mediation.
 - ask for feedback on how we handle complaints so that we can learn and improve the service we offer.
- We provide training and support to our staff to make sure they have the right knowledge and skills to do their job properly

How we will work to prevent anti-social behaviour and avoid it

- We provide a range of measures to try to prevent anti social behaviour. Some of these are as follows.
 - Mediation Service for tenants who have become involved in a dispute with their neighbours
 - Working with the police, council departments and other agencies to make sure we deal effectively with anti social behaviour
 - Providing support to tenants to help them manage their tenancy
 - Introductory tenancies to help make sure new tenants are aware of their responsibilities
 - Incentive schemes such as gardening competitions to improve estates.
 - Local Community Safety Partnerships to deal with issues affecting different agencies
 - Acceptable behaviour contracts with young offenders
- We offer support to offenders and people at risk of offending. Some of these are as follows.
 - Youth Inclusion and Support Panels which work with young people at risk of

offending

- Projects to support and rehabilitate offenders and people at risk of offending because of problems related to drug and alcohol abuse, mental health or disability.
- Acceptable behaviour contracts with offenders.
- Multi agency protection panels to ensure that support is in place for ex-offenders returning to the community

Multi agency working – a partnership approach

- Our major partners in tackling anti-social behaviour are:-
 - Six Town Housing
 - Tenants & Residents
 - Police
 - Other Council departments
 - Elected Members
 - Multi-Agency Partnerships
- We exchange information about people in order to prevent and detect crime and disorder within the borough.
- We contribute to several multi agency partnerships which work together to deal with anti social behaviour
- We work closely with the Council's Community Safety team to help tackle anti social behaviour across the borough

What happens when you make a complaint

- You do not have to be a council tenant to make a complaint. The person you are complaining about does not have to be a council tenant either. You can make a complaint about anti social behaviour you are experiencing, or you can complain on behalf of someone else
- You can complain in a number of ways:
 - in person by visiting any housing office or customer information point
 - by telephone during office hours
 - by writing to us at Town Hall, Knowsley Street, Bury.
 - by speaking to your MP or local councillor
 - by e-mail at housing@bury.gov.uk or on the Council's website www.bury.gov.uk
 - Springs residents should contact the TMO in the first instance
- You should also contact the police if you witness or experience serious anti social behaviour or criminal activity
- We will
 - treat your complaint seriously when you make it
 - assign a named officer who will work closely with you to find out what your complaint is about and what action we can take
 - respond to reports of anti social behaviour within the timescales set out in our service standards
 - respond immediately to serious anti social behaviour
 - offer help, advice & support to victims of anti social behaviour.
 - investigate any complaints of anti social behaviour that we receive which take

place on a Council estate

How we will work with you to deal with your complaint

We will

- agree an action plan for dealing with the problem
- gather evidence and make background checks to independently verify a complaint
- ask you to keep diaries of any incidents which occur
- interview the person you have complained about as quickly as possible.
- try to resolve a complaint where possible by agreement or issuing a warning
- If you need specific support, we can
 - give advice and support outside normal working hours if you need it
 - arrange for alarms or security lighting to be installed
 - provide video cameras or professional witnesses in some situations to verify witness statements
 - use sound recorders to verify witness statements;
 - offer hand held tape recorders so you can tell us about any problems you experience.
 - arrange for extra security of doors and windows (this is called target hardening)
 - arrange for the police to patrol and check your home regularly if you are being threatened or are in fear
 - offer you a temporary or permanent move if you are in fear of violence or attack.
 - make a referral to someone who can help you with support and advice e.g. Women's Aid, Victim Support, Racial Harassment Helpline etc.
 - provide help if you do not understand English, through our translation service or Language Line.

Taking enforcement action

We will

- where possible, try to resolve cases without needing to take formal enforcement action
- take enforcement action where this is needed to resolve a complaint
- in serious cases, take enforcement action immediately
- use a range of legal remedies to tackle anti social behaviour
 - Injunctions
 - Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO)
 - Possession Orders (Eviction)
 - Demotion Orders(changing the type of tenancy held by a person who is behaving in an anti-social way)
 - Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- We may ask you to act as a witness in court hearings
- We will offer support to you if you are a witness involved in court hearings
- We will use the local media, leaflets and posters to publicise successful enforcement action

- If you are a witness in court, we will;
 - take you to and from court on the day
 - offer help, advice and support before the court hearing, on the day and after the hearing.
 - keep you up to date as the case progresses
 - visit the court with you before the hearing to make you familiar with the layout.
 - agree with you what support you need after the hearing and arrange to provide it.

Monitoring & data collection

- We use a range of performance indicators to help us monitor and improve the service we provide
- We report them regularly to tenants, residents, staff and elected members

This booklet is a summary of the things we have put in place to deal with anti-social behaviour. We provide it free of charge. You can look at the complete version at any housing office or customer information point or on the Council's website www.bury.gov.uk

You can buy your own copy of the complete version

- from any housing office or customer information point
- by telephoning us during office hours
- by writing to us at Town Hall, Knowsley Street, Bury.
- by e-mail at housing@bury.gov.uk