

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Tenant Services Management Board – 19th June 2012

Housing Estates Team Anti Social Behaviour Strategy 2012-2015

Report of Housing Manager – Lettings – Paul Hadley

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Jean Adkins)

1.0 Executive Summary

This report has been produced to propose the new Anti Social Behaviour Strategy for Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services.

It outlines the strategic overview that tenants in council housing can expect from Housing Services in relation to Anti Social Behaviour.

It provides details of the specific elements of the service.

It will show what the Housing Services vision is in relation to Anti Social Behaviour and reflects the recent introduction of the Respect Charter.

The Strategy is a living document it is for three years and will be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect changes in legislation, and the yearly objectives. It also will link into the new and revised housing service Policies that have recently been written and agreed.

2.0 Background

Tackling anti-social behaviour is a priority for our elected members and tenant representatives. This strategy is key to the effective management of our housing stock at Taunton Deane Borough Council. The housing service has two estate officers who focus on dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour. Their roles are to resolve Anti-Social Behaviour on the council's housing estates. They work closely with our partner agencies and other housing providers within Taunton Deane to resolve and prevent Anti Social Behaviour in our housing stock

Housing services are responsible for ensuring tenants comply with their tenancy agreement and do not behave in an anti-social manner within our communities. The service house's some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society and we must show support to them.

This strategy has been developed in line with the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 & The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 (as amended), which defines anti-social behaviour as:

“Acting in an anti-social manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the perpetrator”.

3.0 Anti-social Behaviour Strategy

The aim of this strategy is to provide:

- Demonstrate leadership and a strategic commitment to deal effectively with reports of Anti Social Behaviour.
- Providing an accessible and accountable service for all tenants.
- Taking swift action to protect tenants and communities from Anti Social Behaviour.
- Adopt a supportive approach to working with victims of and witnesses to Anti Social Behaviour.
- Encourage individual and community responsibility from our tenants. To support the development of sustainable communities.

Have a clear focus on prevention and early intervention to Anti Social Behaviour.

- Ensure staff in the service takes an effective value for money approach.

A copy of the Anti-social Behaviour Strategy is attached at Appendix 1.

4.0 Legal Comments

There are no legal Issues arising from this report.

5.0 Links to Corporate aims

The delivery of good anti social behaviour services can contribute positively to the following council aims: Tackling Deprivation and Sustainable Community Development; Regeneration; and Affordable Housing and Climate change

6.0 Environmental and Community Safety Implications

All of the anti social behaviour cases/investigations received by the Housing Estates Team can have environmental or community safety implications, all cases are managed by completion of a risk assessment.

7.0 Equalities Impact

A Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix 2.

8.0 Risk Management

Risk assessments will be completed for any significant operational changes that are implemented from a review of operational processes.

9.0 Partnership Implications

The strategy will improve working relationships and information exchange with partners.

10.0 Recommendation

It is recommend that the Tenant Services Management Board approve this report and the attached strategy:

Contact:	Officer Name	Paul Hadley – Housing Manager - Lettings
	Direct Dial No	01823 356334
	e-mail address	p.hadley@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services Anti –social Behaviour
Strategy 2012-2015

1.0 Introduction

About Taunton Deane Borough Council

Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) manages and provides housing services for over 6,000 tenants. The district was formed on 1st April 1974, and covers approx 179 square miles with a population of 109,400.

This document outlines the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Strategy that will be delivered by Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services over the next 3 years 2012-15 within a local, county and national context.

This strategy has been developed in line with the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 & The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 (as amended), which defines anti-social behaviour as:

“Acting in an anti-social manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the perpetrator”.

In Housing Services we recognise that by providing a strong housing management service a real difference can be made to the quality of lives of our tenants. We want people to feel safe and confident in their homes and in their communities.

The Housing Service aims to ensure that tenants and leaseholders live peacefully within their own homes and communities. We recognise that failure to tackle anti-social behaviour effectively could substantially blight the quality of life for those people living with anti-social behaviour or noise nuisance, and can also damage our ability to develop sustainable communities.

2.0 Housing Service Vision

Our vision for the ASB service is:

“We are a service committed to preventing anti-social behaviour, and where it does occur, we will work in partnership to tackle it effectively and robustly, recognising that failure to do so can have a devastating effect on our communities”.

The aim of this strategy is to provide:

- Demonstrate leadership and a strategic commitment to deal effectively with reports of Anti Social Behaviour.
- Providing an accessible and accountable service for all tenants.
- Taking swift action to protect tenants and communities from Anti Social Behaviour.
- Adopt a supportive approach to working with victims of and witnesses to Anti Social Behaviour.
- Encourage individual and community responsibility from our tenants. To support the development of sustainable communities.
- Have a clear focus on prevention and early intervention to Anti Social Behaviour.
- Ensure staff in the service takes an effective value for money approach.

Tackling anti-social behaviour is a priority for our elected members and tenant representatives. This strategy is key to the effective management of our housing stock at TDBC. The housing service has two Estate officers who specialise in dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour. Their roles are to resolve Anti-Social Behaviour on the council's housing estates. They work closely with our partner agencies and other housing providers within Taunton Deane to resolve and prevent Anti Social Behaviour in our housing stock.

3.0 The Respect Housing Charter – The National Perspective

In order to demonstrate our commitment to the wider community and that we will do everything that is reasonably possible to tackle anti-social behaviour and deliver a high quality service, we have signed up to the Housing **RESPECT** Charter.

We will deliver our vision and the **RESPECT** charter through our housing management role and broader involvement with communities and partners.

We recognise that failure to effectively tackle anti-social behaviour could:

- Substantially affect the lives of those individuals who are living with nuisance or anti-social behaviour
- Impact on the local environment and culture of an area, which in turn could damage our ability to develop sustainable communities.

The [Respect Charter](#) aims to be outcome-focused and not prescriptive or process-driven. Its purpose is to improve ASB services, and consists of seven core commitments:

1. Demonstrating leadership and strategic commitment
2. Providing an accessible and accountable service
3. Taking swift action to protect communities
4. Adopting a supportive approach to working with victims and witnesses
5. Encouraging individual and community responsibility
6. Having a clear focus on prevention and early intervention
7. Ensuring a value for money approach is embedded in the service

The [Respect Charter](#) has identified the above core responsibilities, which will form the basis of our key objectives.

Demonstrating leadership and strategic commitment

Our values, aims and objectives are reinforced by our approach to ASB and this approach is subject to ongoing ratification, assessment and review by both our tenants and us. Tackling ASB is a core strategic and operational business activity and we will ensure that we commit sufficient capacity and resources to tackle ASB effectively.

We provide relevant training, capacity building and support across all levels of the organisation (including staff, tenants, the governing body and relevant partners) that supports the delivery of a targeted action/service improvement plan for ASB.

We clearly communicate to all tenants that ASB will not be tolerated. Our staff and contractors are supported to identify and report incidents where they have been subject to or have observed ASB.

We proactively engage with relevant partners to support a joined-up approach to tackling the root causes of ASB and promoting positive behaviours.

Objectives 2012/2013

- Continue to develop links with our partner agencies
- Develop service level agreements where appropriate with partner agencies

Providing an accessible and accountable service

We provide information, which sets out what the service is how, it is delivered and how it can be tailored to meet local needs. All information about our services can be made available in a variety of formats, and translated into relevant community languages on request. There is a range of ways for our tenants can report anti-social behaviour including telephone, letter, in person and email.

We take seriously all complaints about the services we provide. This is demonstrated in our overall approach to handling complaints, which are regularly monitored against targets and contribute to the process of continual learning.

We complete satisfaction questionnaires with people who report anti-social behaviour. The feedback received is used to improve our anti-social behaviour service.

We will publicise what our partners and we have done to tackle ASB in our communities - both our prevention and enforcement activities. Our approach balances the need to protect communities and build confidence that ASB will not be tolerated.

Objectives 2012/2013

- Forge links with all agencies that serve the community
- Develop how we communicate with partners and tenants
- Publicise and promote work undertaken by the Housing Officers

Taking swift action to protect communities

Housing Officers are aware of the range of tools and powers available to them and know how to use them appropriately in accordance with our policies and procedures.

We apply consistent and robust processes for managing ASB cases. The actions that we take to tackle ASB are carefully considered and are proportionate to the effects of the behaviour on individuals, communities and the environment.

We have a positive approach to gathering evidence and utilise a variety of sources to support action to tackle ASB.

We have strong working relationships with partner agencies that investigate and tackle ASB.

We act swiftly when a party fails to engage with support provision and their behaviour does not improve.

We seek to conclude cases appropriately, in a timely manner and, where possible, in consultation with the complainant.

Objectives 2012/2013

- To ensure that all appropriate and available steps are utilized before enforcement action is considered.
- To ensure all available solutions and remedies are explored with partner agencies.

- To publicise good practice and success to encourage more tenant participation.

Adopting a supportive approach to working with victims and witnesses

Our management of ASB cases demonstrates a clear focus on protecting people from harm and on supporting victims and witnesses.

Where possible we will consider measures to identify and respond, to both the risk to and vulnerability of victims and witnesses.

Housing officers are aware of and know how to access the support that is available to assess the needs of victims and witnesses on a case-by-case basis, particularly where victims and witnesses are vulnerable.

We agree pre court action plans with complainants, update them regularly on the progress of their case and inform them directly of all key developments.

Where possible we will ensure that individuals attending court are supported and we will liaise with the courts where necessary to minimise any risks or distress to individuals attending court.

Objectives 2012/2013

- Improve current support for witness's pre and post court
- Develop an out of hours reporting line for victims
- Work with partner agencies to develop a witness support service
- Develop a witness support network with partners
- Encourage multiagency approach to support victims and witnesses

Encouraging individual and community responsibility

We will work with tenants, tenant groups and partner agencies to promote tolerance, balancing individual rights with their impact on others and the community using both legal and non-legal options.

We will encourage and facilitate community involvement among tenants including how they can support each other to help them and us tackle anti social behaviour. Where appropriate and safe we encourage and support tenants to resolve minor neighbour nuisance issues amicably between themselves.

We will strive to effectively meet our tenants expectations of our anti social behaviour service.

Objectives 2012/2013

- Identify barriers to the reporting anti social behaviour then develop strategies and tactics to encourage individuals and communities to report anti social behaviour.
- Develop tenant involvement with the anti social behaviour service.

Having a clear focus on prevention and early intervention

We will develop policies that contribute to the prevention of anti social behaviour, nuisance and promote neighbourhood sustainability. Our tenancy agreement sets out clearly what is meant by anti social behaviour and the standard of behaviour expected from our tenants.

We proactively work with our partners to address the causes of anti social behaviour and reduce the opportunities for it. (E.g. street drinking, loud music)

We use a range of early interventions to prevent anti social behaviour from escalating. (ABC's, parenting orders, noise abatement notices)

Objectives 2012/2013

- Work with partner agencies to address local concerns and threats
- Good estate management – swift response to graffiti and refuse clearance
- Having clear policies and service standards that set out we can do and what is expected from our tenants.

Ensuring a value for money approach is embedded in the service

Housing officers understand the value for money ethos and they are encouraged to identify value for money opportunities. It is used in our performance management and reporting framework.

We understand the cost of the anti social behaviour service and how we are delivering the service. Costs, performance and satisfaction are benchmarked against comparative organisations. To ensure that our tenants are provided with a cost efficient and effective service.

Through tenant scrutiny arrangements, tenants, officers, and members are provided with appropriate information on costs, performance and satisfaction.

Objectives 2012/2013

- Continue to benchmark our services against comparable organisations to ensure a good service is provided at an appropriate cost.
- Provide effective financial reporting supported by statistical data.

Ambitions for 2013/2015

This strategy also sets out what our service ambitions beyond 2013; the following are initiatives or projects that will be developed to be in place between 2013 – 2015. These initiatives will require work by officers to develop these service improvements and will be reviewed with our tenants and elected members before being introduced.

- Continue to monitor service delivery

- Develop tenants and residents groups understanding of the anti social behaviour service
- Improve communications with tenants, partners, and staff in relation to anti social behaviour reporting including the development of a media protocol to ensure reporting of good work.
- Ensure successful outcomes to complaints

4.0 Partnership working

Partnership working is essential for us to prevent and resolve anti social behaviour effectively. TDBC recognise that this multi agency approach is fundamental to providing a service to our tenants that is dedicated to tackling anti social behaviour and its causes.

Our Partners include:

- Police
- Environmental Health
- Health Services
- Children and Young People's Department
- Youth Offending Service
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Support Services
- Mental Health Services

(This list is not exhaustive.)

As part of our commitment to Partnership working TDBC attends and contributes to the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy Group, Anti Social Behaviour Steering Group Crime both of which are multi-agency forums aimed at strategically planning and allocating the appropriate resources to resolve anti-social behaviour within Somerset.

With our Partner Agencies we are signed up to an information sharing protocol, which enables us to share appropriate and relevant information with each other in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

5.0 Summary

Taunton Deane has a proven track record of working in partnership to tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour, however we must not become complacent. The national and local agendas around anti-social behaviour will continue to evolve. This strategy allows for development of working practices, both traditional and innovative to meet the needs of our service users.

In conclusion, through this strategy we will ensure that we all remain focused

on our ultimate aims, which are to improve quality of life and to make Taunton Deane a safer place and a place of choice for our tenants.

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services

Appendix 1
Anti-social Behaviour Strategy
Dated 11th June 2012

Anti Social Behaviour
April 2012 Action plan

Objective	Action	TDBC Person Responsible	Completion Dates	Key Activities	Progress
Demonstrating leadership and strategic commitment	Further Develop links with partner agencies	Paul Hadley	April 2013	Information Sharing event to be arranged for partner agencies to share information on housing and ASB.	Format of the day discussed and identify appropriate people to attend.
	Establish a tenants working group to focus on ASB services	Paul Hadley	April 2013	TSMB identify 2 areas each year for scrutiny. Then a forum group is instigated to scrutinise the relevant area and report back to TSMB.	Completed

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services

	Further develop existing service level agreements	Paul Hadley	April 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Somerset ASB Strategy meeting • Attend local ASB steering group meeting 	Completed and ongoing
Providing an accessible and accountable service	Develop an ASB tenants steering group	Paul Hadley	April 2013	TSMB identify 2 areas each year for scrutiny. Then a forum group is instigated to scrutinise the relevant area and report back to TSMB.	Completed
	Further develop links with all agencies that serve the community	Paul Hadley	April 2013	Information Sharing event to be arranged for partner agencies to share information on housing and ASB.	

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services

	Continue and improve upon how we communicate with partners and tenants	Paul Hadley	April 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer satisfaction to be used to assess service • Obtain feedback from partner agencies on joint working. 	
	Publicise and promote good work undertaken by the ASB Officers	Paul Hadley	April 2013	Develop a media strategy in line with TDBC's media responses.	Contact has been made with Debbie Rundle to develop media strategy.
Taking swift action to protect communities	To ensure that all appropriate and available preventable tools are utilized before enforcement action is considered.	John Hart Tony Knight	April 2013	Continue training in current law and policies.	ASB module of Academy purchased and implementation date waited.
	To ensure all available solutions and remedies are explored with partner agencies.	John Hart Tony Knight	April 2013	Maintaining current knowledge and improvement by training as and when required	

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services

	To publicise good practice and success to encourage more tenant participation	Paul Hadley	April 2013	Media strategy to promote good work.	Debbie Rundle contacted and meeting to be held to develop a ASB media strategy.
Adopting a supportive approach to working with victims and witnesses	Improve current support for witness's pre and post court	Steven Clarke	April 2013	Support from Victims Support and Witness Service.	Victim support contact and agreement to support Victims agreed. Awaiting most appropriate case.
	Develop an out of hours reporting line for victims	John Hart	April 2013	Voice mail Out of hours reporting service developed	Report completed by JH with a recommended option.
	Work with partner agencies to develop a witness support service	Steven Clarke	April 2013	Contact with Victim Support and Witness Service	Both victim support and witness service have agreed to support our victims as and when required.
	Develop a witness support network with partners	Steven Clarke	April 2013	Contact and maintain service level agreements	

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services

				with partners	
	Encourage a multi-agency approach to support victims and witnesses	John Hart Steven Clarke	April 2013	Contact with Victim Support and Witness Service	Completed
Encouraging individual and community responsibility	Identify barriers to the reporting anti social behaviour then develop strategies and tactics to encourage individuals and communities to report anti social behaviour.	Paul Hadley	April 2013	Produce ASB Strategy.	Ongoing work to have access to police information systems direct.
	Develop tenant involvement with the anti social behaviour service.	Paul Hadley	April 2013	ASB tenant group implemented. Number of tenants involved	Scrutiny through the TSMB.
Having a clear focus on prevention and early intervention	Work with partner agencies to address local concerns and threats	Paul Hadley	April 2013	Number of reports Time taken to remove/deal with the nuisance.	

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services

	Good estate management – swift response to graffiti and refuse clearance	Estate Officers	April 2013	Number of reports Time taken to remove/deal with the nuisance.	
	Having clear policies and service standards that set out we will do and what is expected from our tenants.	Paul Hadley	April 2013	Revised ASB Policy Anti Hate Policy Domestic Abuse Policy Witness Support Policy Service standards for ASB, Hate, Domestic Abuse, Witness Support, Witness Information for Court.	Completed
Ensuring a value for money approach is embedded in the service	Bench mark our services against comparable organisations to ensure a good service is provided at an appropriate cost	Stephen Boland Paul Hadley	April 2013	Reports produced for Staff and tenants. Stat analysis to identify areas of good practice.	

Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Services

	Provide effective financial reporting supported by statistical data	Stephen Boland Paul Hadley	April 2013	Reports produced for Staff and tenants.	
--	---	-------------------------------	------------	---	--

Equality Impact Assessment – pro-forma

Responsible person	<i>Paul Hadley</i>	Job Title Housing Manager - Lettings
Why are you completing the Equality Impact Assessment? (Please mark as appropriate)	Proposed new strategy	Anti Social Behaviour Strategy
	Change to Policy/service	
	Budget/Financial decision – MTFP	
	Part of timetable	
What are you completing the Equality Impact Assessment on (which, service, MTFP proposal)	Housing Service	
Section One – Scope of the assessment		
What are the main purposes/aims of the policy/decision/service?	<p><i>The aim is to</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Produce Anti Social Behaviour Strategy till 2015</i> 2. <i>Produce a Annual Action Plan until 2015</i> 	
Which protected groups are targeted by the policy/decision/service?	<p><i>Taunton Deane Borough Council's HRA housing stock comprises of approximately 6,000 rented homes, with a further 372 leasehold properties. In addition, the Council also manages two private leasehold schemes for the elderly. Housing services are designed to ensure they meet the needs of a wide ranging customer base. As such the Tenancy Termination Leaflet is targeted at all the protected groups including: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or belief; Sex and Sexual Orientation; Marriage and civil partnerships.</i></p>	

<p>What evidence has been used in the assessment - data, engagement undertaken – please list each source that has been used</p>	<p>Data collected from all previous reports of Anti- social Behaviour.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of reports 2. Type of reports 3. Outcomes of the reports <p>Engagement has been undertaken with the following</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Police 2. Somerset Racial Equality group 3. Social Services 4. TDBC Community Development Team 5. TDBC Supported Housing Team <p>Information can be found on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Service Neighbour Nuisance Statistical reports 2. Initial ASB reporting forms 3. ASB module (From Aug 2011)
---	---

Section two – Conclusion drawn about the impact of service/policy/function/change on different groups highlighting negative impact, unequal outcomes or missed opportunities for promoting equality

There will be no impact in service or on policy in relation to the different groups. It will reinforce current policy and procedures in the reporting and investigation of Anti-social Behaviour. It shows support for victim and witness of Anti-social behaviour and links into other agencies and support networks available to our tenants.

I have concluded that there is/should be:

No major change - no adverse equality impact identified	No major change in the service provision.
Adjust the policy/decision/service	
Continue with the policy/decision/service	

Stop and remove the policy/decision/service		
Reasons and documentation to support conclusions		
Section four – Implementation – timescale for implementation		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. January 2012 – Initial meeting to discuss development of ASB strategy 2. February 2012 Meeting with Housing Services Lead 3. March 2012 consultant with partner agencies 4. June 2012 – Implement Anti-social Behaviour Strategy 		
Section Five – Sign off		
Responsible officer Paul Hadley	Housing Manager - Lettings	
Date	Date	
Section six – Publication and monitoring		
Published on <i>June 2012</i>		
Next review date <i>June 2015</i>	Date logged on Covalent	

Action Planning

The table should be completed with all actions identified to mitigate the effects concluded.

Actions table

Service area				Date		
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed	Who is responsible?	By when?	How will this be monitored?	Expected outcomes from carrying out actions	