

Appendix A

DRAFT Welwyn Hatfield Anti Social Behaviour and Crime Strategy 2016-19

INTRODUCTION

Anti-social behaviour, in all its forms, blights the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. At its worst it can damage the health and wellbeing of victims.

We want the people of Welwyn Hatfield to feel safe in their neighbourhoods and to quietly enjoy their homes. We are committed to working in partnership, using all of the tools at our disposal, to ensure that crime and anti-social behaviour are prevented where possible and tackled quickly when it does emerge.

As a community-focussed borough we consult fully with people in the local community so that we can understand what we can do to help them feel safe. Through surveys, focus groups and community events people have told us that crime and anti-social behaviour is a priority concern. Customer feedback is a key driver for our strategy.

The council's Business Plan (2015 – 2018) sets out five Corporate Objectives:

- To maintain a safe and healthy community
- To protect and enhance the environment
- To meet the borough's housing needs
- To help build a strong local economy
- To engage with our communities and provide value for money

Our duties and aims in tackling anti-social behaviour serve all five of these objectives.

Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust, as an Arms Length Management Organisation, acts as the managing agent for the council and is a key partner in ensuring that we provide safe and secure homes and neighbourhoods. The Trust also fulfils the council's statutory responsibility to tackle anti social behaviour on its behalf, working alongside the council at both an operational and strategic level to deliver our mutual ambition to keep the borough safe.

Preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour and criminality through a partnership and customer focused approach is therefore the cornerstone of this strategy. The council, in partnership with the Trust, aims to build on its successes and continue to work with the police and other agencies to keep our neighbourhoods safe.

This strategy sets out how we intend to deliver our commitment to tackling crime and anti-social behaviour through a framework of prevention, early intervention, support and enforcement in partnership with statutory, non-statutory and voluntary sector organisations. This strategy is designed to complement partner strategies and to position the services delivered by us to meet the aspirations and needs of tenants and leaseholders.

DEFINITION OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The term 'anti-social behaviour' covers a wide range of activities and there are a number of definitions. For the purpose of this strategy we have adopted the following definition as set out in the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003:

'Conduct which is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person and which directly or indirectly relates to, or affects, the housing management functions of a relevant landlord or conduct which consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation owned or managed by a relevant landlord for an unlawful purpose.'

We also rely on the definition from the Crime and Disorder Act 1998:

'Acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself'.

OUR OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Anti Social Behaviour and Crime Strategy is to **create a safe environment where people want to live**, helping to meet the council's Corporate Objective *'to maintain a safe and healthy community'*.

The Strategy is based on six objectives which provide the framework for delivering an excellent anti social behaviour service to all those living and working in Welwyn Hatfield. The objectives are to:

1. "Provide a victim centred approach to identifying and tackling anti-social behaviour and criminality, ensuring that communities and individuals are kept informed and are reassured by our actions".
2. "Achieve safer communities through:
 - Preventing antisocial behaviour
 - Putting in place early interventions following reports of anti social behaviour
 - Taking prompt and effective enforcement actions."
3. "Maintain and further develop effective partnership response to crime and antisocial behaviour."
4. "Provide a robust response to Hate Crime and Domestic Abuse"
5. "Promote and encourage community responsibility and involvement"
6. "Tackle environmental anti-social behaviour and invest in local communities".

SERVICE DELIVERY

The Trust's responsibilities and the standards required in preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour in the borough are set out within the Service Level Agreement between the Trust and the council. This is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure

that it remains relevant, as well as monthly meetings between key officers to keep the council informed of improvements and performance.

The service is provided by the Trust's Anti-social Behaviour Team and also cuts across many other service areas, including the Housing Management Team and, in some cases, the Independent Living Team and Housing Needs Team. The Trust works closely with the council's Public Health and Protection Team and Community and Environment Team.

The standards of service provided and the way in which services are delivered will be aligned to the evolving Customer Services Strategy for the council and Trust.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES

There are a number of key actions that we will undertake throughout the lifetime of this strategy to meet our service aim and achieve our objectives. This strategy is supported by an Action Plan which provides further information on actions, responsible persons and timescales for delivery.

Objective One:

“Providing a victim centred approach to identifying and tackling anti-social behaviour and criminality, ensuring that communities and individuals are kept informed and are reassured by our actions”.

Our response will be focused on the impact of the incident and support for people who are more at risk of harm or repeat offending. We will:

- focus on the harm and impact that an incident of crime or anti-social behaviour has had on the victim(s) and will provide additional support to those who are at more risk of harm or vulnerable to repeat offending.
- use the multi-agency integrated database SafetyNet to strengthen the identification of (and response to) vulnerable and repeat victims.
- review our Victim and Witness Support Policy to ensure that it fully reflects service delivery that is genuinely victim focused.
- ensure our staff are well trained and have a full understanding of harm and vulnerability in order to provide a truly victim focused service.
- develop a quarterly report to analyse customer satisfaction with the way we manage cases.
- develop an action plan to improve customer satisfaction in this area.
- share this information with the council and update it on improvement measures.
- deliver effective and timely communications to reassure individuals and communities and promote confidence in our services.

Objective Two

“Achieve safer communities through:

- **Preventing antisocial behaviour**
- **Putting in place early interventions following reports of anti social behaviour**
- **Taking prompt and effective enforcement actions.”**

Prevention is crucial in developing safe and sustainable communities. Early intervention can prevent anti-social behaviour from escalating and improve customer confidence.

We will:

- work with partners and communities to develop and support community-led preventative and diversionary activities.
- explore the use of social enterprise initiatives in preventing crime and anti-social behaviour.
- build on our success with partners to reduce the opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour including making use of CCTV, mobile patrols, hot spot analysis and response and identification of emerging trends.
- make best use of early intervention tools.
- take prompt, appropriate and effective enforcement action, using all powers available to us.
- target serious and persistent incidents of anti-social behaviour and criminality that can blight our communities if left unchallenged.
- review our approach to reinforcing tenants’ responsibilities, for both new and existing tenants.
- work with partners to support families with complex needs.
- develop an in-house mediation service
- work with partners responsible for issues facing young people to give due attention to the their behaviour and needs, with emphasis placed on enforcement and remedial action.
- maintain our role within the **Thriving Families** agenda. Hertfordshire’s Thriving Families service is a multi-agency partnership incorporating Government’s *Troubled Families initiative*, locally led by Hertfordshire County Council’s Children’s Services department.
- proactively use **Restorative Justice Practices** within our anti-social behaviour service and identify opportunities for joint working with partners and social enterprises initiatives.

Thriving Families works innovatively with families across the borough with multiple and complex needs who benefit from intensive support to work with issues such as attendance at school, crime and employment. This will provide better value and more joined-up and effective services.

Restorative practice in communities resolves conflicts and disputes before they escalate into crime and is an effective approach to dealing with antisocial behaviour and neighbour disputes. It enables people to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. It delivers effective outcomes owned by the local community and creates stable, positive community environments.

Objective Three:

“Maintain and further develop effective partnership response to crime and antisocial behaviour.”

Effective partnership working is an essential and integral part of our anti-social behaviour strategy and is a crosscutting theme across all of our Strategic objectives.

The Community Safety Partnership Action Plan includes measures which continue to tackle the anti-social behaviour issues that residents are most concerned about. We are a key partner and we will continue to deliver on our commitments to this plan.

We will:

- continue to actively participate in problem solving.
- support and empower our staff to influence and evaluate positive solutions.
- continue to support the multi-agency Community Involvement Days and use survey data and other information generated through community engagement to identify and respond to local priorities.
- conduct regular estate walkabouts with tenants and partner organisations.
- undertake neighbourhood satisfaction surveys to identify problem areas and deliver a coordinated response, including environmental improvements. Information from the Trust’s Pulse surveys and other forms of intelligence will be included.
- continue to work in partnership with the Fire and Rescue Service to prevent fire related anti-social behaviour and crime and to support vulnerable victims through home fire safety checks and target hardening and continue to raise awareness of fire safety through preventative interventions.

It is important to our communities and to victims of crime and anti-social behaviour that justice has been done and that perpetrators make amends. We will develop our links with **BeNCH** (community rehabilitation company) to deliver a sustainable Community Payback programme on our estates and in our communities. We will also work with our partners to explore the potential to develop a civil restorative justice approach to low-level anti-social behaviour within our service.

Objective four

“Provide a robust response to Hate Crime and Domestic Abuse”

Domestic abuse and hate crime have a significant impact on individuals, families and communities. These types of crime are often hidden within our communities.

We recognise that many of the objectives, outcomes and actions contained within this strategy can affect anyone. We aim to address issues of inequality and tackle the causes of hate crime and domestic abuse by:

Domestic abuse

- Providing help, support and appropriate actions to minimise the risk of harm and repeat victimisation to survivors of domestic abuse.
- Continuing to work in partnership through the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) for domestic abuse.
- Working in partnership to help ensure the safety of survivors of domestic abuse - we will continue to work with the Sanctuary scheme to offer survivors of domestic abuse the prospect of staying safely in their home by substantially enhancing security and target hardening.
- Identifying the signals of domestic abuse and responding swiftly and sensitively by ensuring that our staff are aware of domestic abuse issues and fully trained and supported to evaluate, risk assess and respond appropriately.
- Continuing to work with local agencies to tackle the cause and effect of domestic abuse and giving support to the Herts Sunflower and the Welwyn Hatfield Domestic Abuse Forum of which we are an active partner.

Hate crime

- Developing innovative approaches to prevent hate crime incidents.
- Raising public confidence to address issues of under reporting. Promote the council offices as a safe and confidential venue to report any issue either as a victim or witness to such incidents.
- Continuing to raise awareness of hate crime and harassment and make clear that hate crime, harassment and bullying in all forms, including cyber bullying is not acceptable and encourage responsible use of social media linking to our Social Media Policy.
- Working with community and faith leaders to ensure that services are accessible, with hard to reach communities having the opportunity to influence service delivery.
- Using our profiling data and partnership information to identify emerging hotspots and tension indicators to ensure that our resources are deployed appropriately and effectively.
- As part of our commitment to be a third party reporting centre ensure that all front line staff are trained to deal with any issues reported and have the skills and information to signpost victims to the relevant statutory or support groups available.

Objective five

“Promote and encourage community responsibility and involvement”

We are committed to resident involvement in the delivery of our crime and anti-social behaviour service. We will:

- support residents to influence and monitor our services and be empowered to take a stand against anti-social behaviour.
- encourage community led projects and initiatives which take a stand against antisocial behaviour. We will support local residents and utilise community funding sources, Neighbourhood Watch and social enterprisers to support local projects.
- encourage and support communities to take ownership of low-level anti-social behaviour by raising awareness of the service, promoting self-resolution techniques, community led mediation and restorative justice.
- ensure that communities have the opportunity to shape, influence and challenge the service via a variety of different methods, including the council’s Tenant Panel and its Scrutiny Committee, Disability Action Group, focus groups, Safer Together events, Community Involvement Days and neighbourhood walkabouts.
- consult with residents in relation to policy changes, service standards, service improvement, future service planning and new initiatives.
- identify groups that are less likely to become involved and put measures in place so that these people can fully access our anti-social behaviour service.
- listen to and learn from what customers tell us about their perception of our services. We will actively encourage and act upon customer feedback and utilise survey data and other types of customer feedback to inform service improvement.
- ensure that the anti-social behaviour service is widely promoted and residents of Welwyn Hatfield are kept informed of positive actions and service developments. To do this we will develop a communication plan in consultation with local residents.
- Continue the provision of life skills and safety awareness events to students learning in the borough to deliver key safety messages and promote diversionary activities.

Objective six

“Tackle environmental anti-social behaviour and invest in local communities”.

Through investing in our neighbourhoods, we aim to develop safer and stronger communities and increase confidence in the safety of our neighbourhoods and create neighbourhoods that are safe and clean. We will:

- participate in regular estate walkabouts with local residents and partners in order to identify problem areas and deliver a coordinated response, including environmental improvements.

- encourage staff across all services areas to report a variety of tenancy and estate management issues, based on a see it, hear it, report it approach.
- develop targeted actions plans to tackle environmental anti-social behaviour and respond to priority areas for litter, parking, dog fouling and untidy gardens by undertaking analysis of hotspot areas, in partnership with Housing Management, Community and Environment Teams, other housing providers and member of the Community Safety Partnership
- listen, act and feedback to community concerns and undertake analysis of hotspot areas and develop targeted action plans based on the principle of prevention, support, early intervention and enforcement to tackle the issues. Where appropriate we will adopt a partnership approach to problem solving and seek innovative community led solutions.
- ensure the housing we manage is safe and well maintained.
- maintain our properties to ensure that they meet the Decent Homes standard, have good energy efficiency and that the doors and windows meet modern security standards.
- continually improving our homes where opportunities arise and deliver these improvements to our homes and communities through the asset management strategy.
- review the process for dealing with untidy gardens and ensure the process is robust and fit for purpose and the penalties for untidy gardens are published.

Elderly and vulnerable households needing support to bring their gardens back to a manageable condition can be referred to the **GreenAiders** project. This scheme provides a one off clearance and support for those who have been assisted.

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

We are committed to resident involvement in delivery of our anti-social behaviour service. We will work with local residents, community groups and local businesses to ensure that our customers re enabled to shape and monitor our service.

We measure satisfaction on our service and our neighbourhoods by undertaking satisfaction and neighbourhood surveys, responding to feedback and undertaking community engagement events.

We know that effective communication is essential to promoting understanding of our anti-social behaviour service, providing reassurance and ensuring our customers are aware of action being taken to tackle anti-social behaviour and getting the whole community involved in identifying and tackling local problems.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 - The Act introduced directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC). The PCC will have implications in the way that ASB is managed across the area that they work.

Respect Charter for Housing - The purpose of the Charter is to provide an outcome focused framework for landlords to and consists the following 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.

We will use the Charter to help us continually seek ways to improve our anti social behaviour services and will use the commitments set out above to self-assess performance in relation to the commitment and identifying areas where we need to make improvements.

Localism Act 2011 - The Act introduced changes to social housing regulation, tenure and planning policy, as well as introducing new community rights. In terms of tackling crime and anti-social behaviour there is the expectation that community led approaches are adopted.

Anti Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 – The Act has streamlined the anti-social behaviour (ASB) toolkit, reducing the number and types of orders available within the legislation to manage ASB from 19 to six, so the remedies are more flexible and faster at stopping ASB.

This Act also focuses on giving better witness satisfaction and making agencies more accountable to witnesses and communities when agencies fail to act.

Welwyn Hatfield Community Safety Partnership

We work with the council as part of the Community Safety Partnership. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by subsequent Acts), district council's have a duty to plan jointly with other named responsible authorities to table the incidence and fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and the misuse of drugs. This complements the council's duty under the Crime and Disorder Act to consider the implications for crime and disorder arising from its operations, and to be accountable for the implications of any decisions it takes.

Priorities - The partnership sets out its key priorities on an annual basis, focussing resources on where they are most needed. The partnership has committed to five priorities for 2015-16 as documented in the Action Plan. It works together to tackle the issues that have an impact on residents' quality of life, creating a safer environment and happier community. The current priorities are:

1. Keep Down Crime, especially burglary at homes
2. Prevent Antisocial Behaviour
3. Reduce the damage caused to neighbourhoods by drugs and alcohol misuse
4. Protect Vulnerable People
5. Support people enduring or escaping domestic abuse, intimidation and harassment

Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust Delivery Plan

The Trust's Delivery Plan 2016-17 maintains the vision **"To be the best at what we do and to do more of what we do best"** and a main focus is on sustaining and improving performance.

Importantly the Delivery Plan creates an operational framework for achieving its mission of **"Working together to deliver excellent services, better homes and pride in our communities"**.

The plan sets the direction over 2016-17. Goals and priorities are influenced heavily by consultation with our tenants, leaseholders and employees.

The Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime Strategy will play a key role in contributing to the goals set out in the Delivery Plan.

6.PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING

Tackling anti-social behaviour is a partnership activity and is monitored by the all participating agencies. We will take account of partners' data in delivering our services and act on shared intelligence. However, as a council and Trust we aim to measure three core elements of our service:

- Our success in resolving cases in the view of the victim;
- The satisfaction of victims with the way their case has been handled;
- Resident perception of the quality of their neighbourhood.

Performance Measures	2016-17 Target	2017-18 Target	2018-19 Target
% of ASB cases recorded where the victim confirms the case is resolved.	60%	TBA	TBA
% of customers satisfied with the way in which their case	60%	TBA	TBA

was handled.

Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live*

88%

TBA

TBA

*tested through the Trust Pulse surveys.

7.VALUE FOR MONEY

We know that anti-social behaviour costs money both in terms of the identifiable cost of tackling it and also the hidden cost of the many consequences. With pressure upon partnerships resources, it follows that reduced levels of anti-social behaviour and increased customer satisfaction for those experiencing anti-social behaviour will help deliver value for money. Getting it right and resolving cases at first intervention deliver efficiencies in terms of staff time and costs, reduction of the need for legal action and the delivery of wider social and economic benefits.

We also know that our work in tackling anti-social behaviour carries a 'social value', something that our Value For Money Strategy commits to deliver. Diversionary activities, confidence building community programmes, restorative justice interventions and employment and training all enhance the social value that the Trust and council can deliver. In this context, this strategy is central to our work in delivering social value.

We are committed to ensuring value for money in the service we provide; we will undertake a value for money review of our anti-social behaviour service. We will seek to identify opportunities for efficiency savings through innovative solutions and evaluate our 'right first time approach' to intervention and invest resources where required. We will identify opportunities for joint working and sharing resources with partners.

8.EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Anti-social behaviour impacts upon all sectors of our communities, however we acknowledge that certain groups or individuals may be more disadvantaged or vulnerable for reasons such as age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, gender reassignment.

This strategy has clear links to our Equality and Diversity Strategy which is committed to promoting equality and embracing and celebrating the diversity of our customers and employees and specifically to 'work with partners to work with partners to tackle hate crime and domestic abuse taking swift action to prevent repeat incidents, and supporting victims and survivors'.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the strategy has been completed.

9.RISK MANAGEMENT

We will endeavour to manage and respond to risks effectively so that we can protect our organisation and our communities. We have a framework for identifying and responding to risks that may impact of service delivery from external factors and

enables us to succeed in providing an excellent customer focused antisocial behaviour service.

Risk	Mitigation
Unable to deliver strategy actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of progress. • Monitoring against performance indicators.
Ineffective partnership working and information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sharing protocols and service level agreements where appropriate. • Continued involvement at key strategic and operational meetings.
Legislative change not embedded across the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full review of policy, procedure and processes and implementation and training plan.
Capacity to develop new initiatives such as diversionary activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear links with community involvement and partners.
Hard to reach communities maybe isolated and unaware of reporting procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full Equality Impact Assessment. • Communication plan