

Anti-social behaviour: What you can expect from us

At Transform, we take anti-social behaviour (ASB) very seriously.

We believe that the best way we can support our clients is by helping to create environments that are safe and secure. To achieve this we have policies and procedures which give clear guidelines on how we deal with incidents of ASB.

Wherever possible we try and prevent problem behaviour before it occurs by providing support and early intervention. Sometimes, however, problems still occur and this leaflet explains what to do if you experience ASB and also explains how we try to be fair to everyone involved.

What is anti-social behaviour?

Broadly, anti-social behaviour is acting in a way that is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress, particularly if the behaviour is persistent.

Examples of anti-social behaviour may include:

- Hate crime, including racial and homophobic hate crime
- Harassment on the grounds of a person's disability, sexuality, religion, gender or age
- Regular noise nuisance
- Nuisance behaviour caused by the use of drugs or alcohol
- Violence and abusive or threatening language or behaviour

ASB does not include behaviour that would be considered reasonable by most people. It is important to remember that we all need to be tolerant of other people's lifestyles within reason. If you live alongside other people there will need to be some give and take on both sides.

What is Transform's policy on anti-social behaviour?

We do not condone anti-social behaviour and we will take all complaints of ASB seriously. If you make a complaint of ASB we will listen carefully to what you have to say. We will investigate the situation carefully and we will do our best to help you solve the problem.

Where the problem is serious and we can take action, we will act quickly. Our powers are limited, however, and so where appropriate we will work alongside other agencies to try and resolve the issue.

What can you do if you experience anti-social behaviour?

If you experience anti-social behaviour, you should follow this process:

- Raise the complaint with Transform staff.
- Provide staff with full details of the problem you are experiencing.
- Staff will assess the complaint and the existing evidence before deciding on the best way to proceed. This will probably involve investigating the complaint.
- We may ask you to gather evidence by completing an Incident Reporting Log, where you can keep a record of any problems you might experience.

We have strict rules around confidentiality, which means that we can only use the information you provide if you agree. Please remember, however, that if you do not give staff permission to use the information you provide, then the action that we can take will be severely limited.

In exceptional circumstances, where we thought that somebody was at risk of harm or where a crime had been committed, we may have to use the information you provide even without your permission. In these rare cases we will always inform you of this beforehand.

What will Transform do about anti-social behaviour?

Once we have received a complaint of ASB we will gather evidence. This might involve visiting properties and interviewing witnesses. If the person accused of ASB is another Transform client then we may interview them at this stage as well. We will then assess the evidence and decide on a suitable course of action. If we think the ASB is serious (for example if it involves a crime) we will inform the police or support you to do so.

Our goal throughout will be to work alongside you to find a way to stop the ASB as soon as possible. We have a range of actions which we can take to tackle ASB and the specific action we take will vary from situation to situation.

Some examples of the action we can take around ASB include:

Mediation: We can meet with all parties together or separately to try and find a way forward that is acceptable to everybody. This is often the most successful way forward.

Work with other agencies: We can involve other agencies to try and help. For example, for noise issues we can involve the Environmental Health Department.

Issue warnings: If the person who is committing the ASB is a Transform client and they are in breach of their licence or tenancy agreement, we can issue verbal and then formal written warnings if their behaviour persists.

Take legal action: Various actions can be taken under current legislation and we would consider whether any of these options would help to stop the ASB.

Loss of tenancy: In very serious cases where all other action had failed and where the perpetrator is a Transform client, we might consider ending their licence agreement or taking legal action to end their tenancy. This would be a very last resort.

Whatever action is taken, we will involve you and support you throughout.

How will we be fair to people accused of anti-social behaviour?

If someone makes a complaint about you, we will make sure we treat you fairly:

- We will not pre-judge the situation. We appreciate that sometimes allegations can be exaggerated or based on misunderstanding or a clash of personalities. Equally, however, they can be completely accurate and fair.
- We will always give you the chance to give your side of the story.
- If you have acted in an anti-social way we will give you the opportunity to change your behaviour in all but the most serious circumstances (where police action may be required).
- We will support you throughout. If there are any factors which may have contributed to the ASB, such as mental health issues, drug or alcohol problems, we will provide you with support and look to engage you with other support agencies.

Our aim will not be to punish people, but to find a way to resolve the issue so that the anti-social behaviour stops to the satisfaction of all parties.

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If you would like this leaflet in large print or audio format, please speak to a member of staff.

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