

# Neighbourhood nuisance

and the tools we can use to tackle  
antisocial behaviour



**Safer Gateshead**  
Safer People, Safer Communities



## **The Gateshead Housing Company is committed to ensuring customers have peace and quiet in their home.**

If your neighbours are causing you a problem we want to help to resolve this as soon as possible.

A range of things can cause neighbourhood problems, from minor disputes to more serious ones.

### **What is nuisance?**

It is behaviour causing others to suffer through lack of consideration.

### **What is harassment?**

This is unreasonable behaviour that is committed towards a particular person, family or group of people for a variety of reasons.

### **What can I do if I have problems with my neighbours?**

Neighbourhood nuisance problems are common.

However, most can be resolved quickly and easily without causing undue distress or upset.

Most problems are caused by not talking to each other.



**You can report antisocial behaviour by calling us on 0191 433 5327, Monday to Friday until 7pm.**

For example, not telling a neighbour about a party or DIY plans.

The first step to resolve a dispute may be simply talking to your neighbour.

If you feel comfortable, you could approach your neighbour to discuss the problems.

If you feel unable to talk to your neighbour, then report the problem as quickly as possible to your estate officer at your housing office.

Their contact details are in our 'How to contact us' leaflet.

This leaflet is available at any housing office or online at [www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/contactus](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/contactus)

## What will we do?

This really depends upon the severity of the situation.

If you are unable to approach your neighbour we will investigate your complaint and provide you with support and advice.

We may ask you to provide supporting evidence, such as giving a statement or completing diary sheets, giving details of incidents.

We will advise you if we are able to take action to help you and if so, what we hope to do.

If you are unwilling to make a statement the options may be limited, but we will explain this to you.



**You can report antisocial behaviour by texting 'ASB' and your message to 0762 480 4167.**

If we are unable to help we will tell you why and, where possible, inform you of other agencies, such as Northumbria Police, who may be able to help.

## What services can I expect from The Gateshead Housing Company?

When you report an incident of antisocial behaviour, we will:

- Provide you with a case reference number, and tell you the name of the investigating officer

- Begin investigating and acknowledge your complaint within one working day for high priority cases (for example, racial harassment, domestic abuse or physical assaults) and five working days for other cases (for example, neighbour disputes)
- Agree what actions will be taken and how we will feedback to you
- Talk to you before closing your case and we will follow this up in writing.



You can also report antisocial behaviour online at [www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/asb](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/asb)

We will measure how we are performing by:

- Asking you if you were satisfied with the way your antisocial behaviour complaint was dealt with
- Asking you if you were satisfied with the outcome of your antisocial behaviour complaint
- Checking we have responded and started investigating cases on time
- Measuring the number of antisocial behaviour cases that were resolved.

## **Our commitment to you:**

- We will deal with your complaint as quickly as possible
- We will give you advice on our policies and procedures
- We will agree with you what actions can be taken to resolve your case and the likely timescales involved
- We may ask you to record any incidents in a diary. We will explain how this should be done and for how long
- We will respect your confidentiality and will not disclose your identity or your complaints without speaking to you first



**You can report antisocial behaviour by calling us on 0191 433 5327,  
Monday to Friday until 7pm.**

- We will offer private interviews to discuss your case
- We will keep you regularly informed of progress and actions taken to resolve your case
- We may work with other agencies to resolve your case, for example, the police and Gateshead Council
- We may act as witnesses by spending time in your home to evidence nuisance
- We may use noise recording equipment to evidence nuisance
- We will advise you of other support that may be available to you, such as Victim Support
- We are aware that you may feel uncomfortable giving evidence in court.

If this happens we will try to use other evidence where possible, such as from housing officers or from other agencies

- If you are willing to go to court we will support you before, during and after this process. Further information is also available in our 'Neighbourhood nuisance - Victim and Witness Charter' leaflet
- We may ask you to complete a satisfaction survey when your case is closed, this will help us improve and develop our service.

Our service standards will be regularly reviewed in consultation with customers as part of our continuing commitment to improve our service.



**To report antisocial behaviour at any time, please e-mail us at [nrt@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:nrt@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)**

## What is the role of the Neighbourhood Relations Team (NRT)?

NRT is a specialist team that supports the work of estate officers and housing managers.

If your estate officer is unable to resolve the issue, then they can refer the matter to NRT to look at solving the issue.

They will investigate the problem and attempt to resolve it for all parties.

They may also:

- Contact other witnesses for information
- Interview your neighbour and, if appropriate, issue a formal warning.

## What action can be taken?

A number of actions can be taken to investigate and resolve antisocial behaviour, including legal action.

However, legal action requires a high level of supporting evidence and the outcome of legal proceedings is dependant upon the judge.

You may also be asked to act as a witness in court.



**You can report antisocial behaviour by calling us on 0191 433 5327, Monday to Friday until 7pm.**

## Tools to tackle antisocial behaviour

There are a number of tools available to us to tackle antisocial behaviour.

These include, but are not limited to:

### Formal Warnings

These can be issued to tenants where there is antisocial behaviour or a breach of tenancy.

These warnings are issued before any formal legal action can be taken.

## Extension of Introductory Tenancy

We can apply to extend the period of a 12-month Introductory Tenancy where we have concerns that the tenant is causing antisocial behaviour.

If granted, this could extend the introductory period for a further six-month period and stop the tenancy from becoming secure.

If no further complaints are received then the tenancy will become a Secure Tenancy.



To report antisocial behaviour contact us by Minicom on  
0191 433 5349.



## Notice of Termination

These can be served on introductory tenants who have not been in their home for 12 months.

The notice explains to the introductory tenant how they have breached their tenancy and that possession proceedings have started.

Tenants have the right to appeal these proceedings.

If there is sufficient evidence to prove that the tenant has caused antisocial behaviour, the court must grant an order for the termination of the tenancy.

## Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABAs)

ABAs are a non-legally binding written agreement between an agency or agencies and an individual.

It details the type of behaviour that an individual should and should not engage in.

Agencies can include The Gateshead Housing Company, Gateshead Council, the police, registered local landlords and Youth Offending Teams.



**You can report antisocial behaviour by calling us on 0191 433 5327,  
Monday to Friday until 7pm.**

## **Antisocial Behaviour Orders**

Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are civil orders that protect the public from behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress.

Orders can be made on anyone aged ten years or over who has displayed antisocial behaviour in the previous six months.

Orders can be imposed for a fixed period, from a minimum of two years to an unlimited maximum limit, or until a further order is made.

The orders are not criminal penalties and are not intended to punish the offender.

However, breach of the order is a criminal offence.

Orders can be made by way of application (often known as 'stand alone'), by order on conviction or as part of proceedings in the County Court.

Interim orders can also be made at the initial court hearing to provide immediate protection for the community until the full hearing is held.



**You can report antisocial behaviour by texting 'ASB' and your message to 0762 480 4167.**

## **Antisocial Behaviour Injunctions**

This is a civil order that can be obtained from the County Court, which can remedy antisocial behaviour.

An injunction made by the court can compel an adult over the age of 18 to do something and/or prevent a particular action or behaviour in certain circumstances.

An injunction can be applied for against tenants, owner-occupiers and non-tenants.

## **Demotion Orders**

These orders allow landlords to apply to the Courts to reduce a person's security of tenure and can be used prior to applying to take possession of a home.

Demotion Orders remove the tenant's right to buy their home and also the right to exchange with other tenants.

If the order is granted the tenancy is replaced with a less secure form of tenancy, which will usually last for a year.



**To report antisocial behaviour at any time, please e-mail us at [nrt@gatesheadhousing.co.uk](mailto:nrt@gatesheadhousing.co.uk)**

## **Notice Of Seeking Possession (NOSP)**

A NOSP is a legal warning and the first step in the process to take possession of a council tenancy.

The notice explains to the tenant how they have breached their tenancy and what may happen if they do not change their behaviour.

## **Evictions**

If a court agrees to grant possession of the tenancy, the tenant must vacate the property within a specific timescale.

If the tenant does not vacate the property within this timescale, an application must be made to court to evict this person, to obtain possession of the property.

## **Suspension Of The Right To Buy**

This can be applied for if a tenant is involved in antisocial behaviour, or a breach of tenancy resulting in legal action being pursued and an application has been made from them to purchase their home.



**You can report antisocial behaviour by calling us on 0191 433 5327, Monday to Friday until 7pm.**

If granted, the suspension allows time for the company to fully investigate all of the allegations, especially in cases where criminal offences have taken place.

The suspension remains in place until all investigations are complete and any legal case has been finalised.

## Other options

There are a number of further actions that can be taken in partnership with other agencies, including Gateshead Council and Northumbria Police.

These actions include, but are not limited to:

- Parenting contracts
- Community agreements
- Crack house closure orders

- Dispersal of groups
- Individual support orders
- Reparation orders.

The company is committed to working in partnership with Gateshead Council.

The company has an antisocial behaviour strategy, which outlines our commitment to tackling this problem.

In partnership with Gateshead Council we have produced an antisocial behaviour policy and procedures document.

You can request a copy of this policy by contacting NRT on **0191 433 5327** or by visiting our website at **[www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk)**



You can also report antisocial behaviour online at **[www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/asb](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/asb)**

## Can anyone else help?

You may be able to receive help from other agencies depending on the problem.

Criminal matters should be reported to the police, who may give us information to help resolve the issue.

You can also get advice from:

- Gateshead Advice Centre (CAB) - **0191 478 5100**
- Gateshead Victim Support - **0191 477 8395**
- Non-emergency police matters - **101.**

Gateshead Council may also be able to help with certain problems, for example, stray dogs, noise and burning refuse.

You can contact Gateshead Council on **0191 433 3000** for advice and information.



To report antisocial behaviour contact us by Minicom on **0191 433 5349.**

## How do I report antisocial behaviour?

To report antisocial behaviour contact your estate officer at your housing office, or:

- Tel: **0191 433 5327**,  
Monday to Friday  
until 7pm
- E-mail: **nrt@gateshead  
housing.co.uk**
- Text 'ASB' and your  
message to:  
**0762 480 4167**
- Minicom: **0191 433 5349**
- Online:  
**www.gatesheadhousing  
.co.uk/asb**

All information regarding neighbourhood nuisance and antisocial behaviour can also be accessed on our website at **www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/nuisance**



To report antisocial behaviour at any time, please e-mail us at **nrt@gatesheadhousing.co.uk**

The Gateshead Housing Company was set up in January 2004 to be responsible for the day-to-day management and maintenance of council housing.

Gateshead Council still owns the housing and remains the landlord.

The services provided by The Gateshead Housing Company are "excellent" with "excellent prospects for improvement", according to the Audit Commission.

**Registered Office:** The Gateshead Housing Company, Keelman House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Fifth Avenue, Team Valley Trading Estate, Gateshead, NE11 0XA.

[www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk)

Registered in England and Wales No.4944719.



Do your bit for recycling by passing this on to a neighbour when you have read it.




Like us at [facebook.com/gatesheadhousingcompany](https://facebook.com/gatesheadhousingcompany)



Follow us at [twitter.com/gatesheadhc](https://twitter.com/gatesheadhc)

Got a smartphone?  
Scan here to find out more



 Informations   Informace   Informácie   زانیاری   معلومات  
Lânguagê Liñê   Informação   Informacje Bilgi   اطلاعات   信息

**Available in large print,  
Braille and audio.**