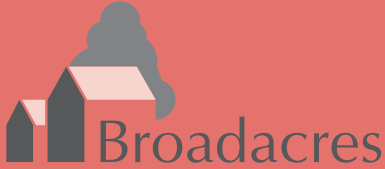


Antisocial behaviour – Being a witness



It's not
just about
the bricks





What is antisocial behaviour?

Antisocial behaviour is behaviour by one person or group of people that unreasonably interferes with the quality of life of someone else.

Examples of antisocial behaviour include:

- noise (for example, regular loud parties, shouting, noise from televisions and music systems, and noise from pets);
- dumping rubbish (fly-tipping);
- nuisance from vehicles (for example, illegal parking);
- graffiti;
- using our properties to sell drugs or for other illegal purposes;
- aggressive and threatening language and behaviour; and
- actual violence against people and damage to property.

Some of the above examples may also be seen as harassment or hate crime.

- Harassment is an offence committed against a person or property to intimidate people and make them feel uncomfortable.
- Hate crime is a more specific type of harassment. Hate crime is a criminal offence committed against a person or property because of their ethnic background, nationality, religion, sex, sexuality or disability.

Who is a witness?

You are a witness to antisocial behaviour if:

- you are experiencing antisocial behaviour; or
- you have seen or heard it happening to someone else.

Witnesses are vital to tackling antisocial behaviour. It is more difficult for us to take effective action without the evidence of people with direct experience of the problem. So, we will support you to be an effective witness.

Personal contact

Your housing officer will stay in contact with you throughout the process. They will agree with you beforehand the action that you and we will take, and keep you informed of the outcome.

Gathering evidence

Unless the problem is sorted out immediately, or is so severe that we take immediate legal action, we will usually tackle the problem in stages. This means that we will give the person who is causing the nuisance an opportunity to stop their behaviour. So, we will need you to keep a record of any ongoing nuisance.

We will give you diary sheets so that you can easily keep a record of anything that happens. If you have difficulty writing things down, we can lend you a tape recorder so that you can tell us what has happened. We will then write down what you have said and ask you to sign it as a true record.

You may also be able to gather other evidence (for example, by taking photographs). In some cases of noise nuisance, your local council's environmental health department may put sound-recording equipment in your home.

Making sure you feel safe

People are often worried about being a witness because they or their friends and family may become a target for more antisocial behaviour, or even violence. If you do not want us to reveal your identity, we will not do so. However, your evidence is still important to us.

If you are worried about being a witness, we will make sure that you continue to feel safe in your home.

If you are one of our tenants, we will put in place any extra security measures that you need, such as door chains or a spyhole. If you have a phone, we can give you an emergency alarm that connects you directly to our 24-hour customer service centre.

If you do not live in one of our properties but you witness antisocial behaviour by our tenants, we will put you in touch with agencies who can provide extra security measures.

If you need someone to support you while we are taking action, we will put you in touch with one of our support workers or with another agency who can help. The phone numbers of your local Victim Support group are at the end of this leaflet. If you need someone to interpret, translate or sign for you, we can arrange this.

We will not normally rehouse you because it means that the person who moves into your property may experience the same problems. However, we will consider rehousing you:

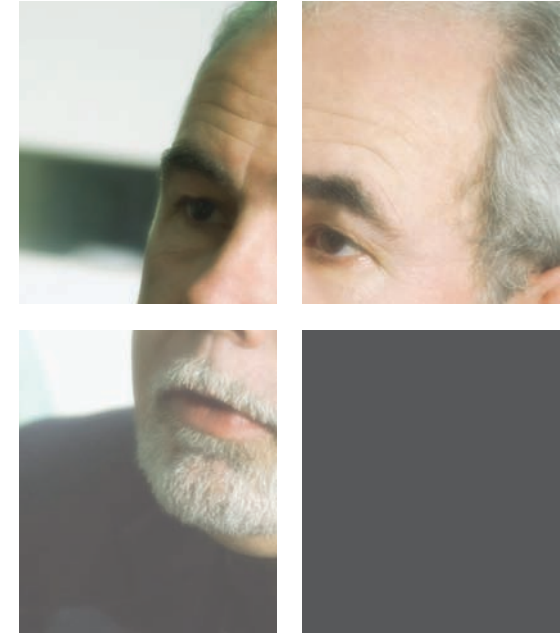
- in severe cases of harassment or hate crime where you need temporary or permanent rehousing for your own safety; or
- in very rare cases, if we feel that rehousing you is the most effective way of sorting the problem out and does not just move the problem on to someone else.

Legal action

We can take legal action at any stage. In severe cases, we will take immediate legal action to protect witnesses. This will not involve revealing your identity to the person who is causing the problem.

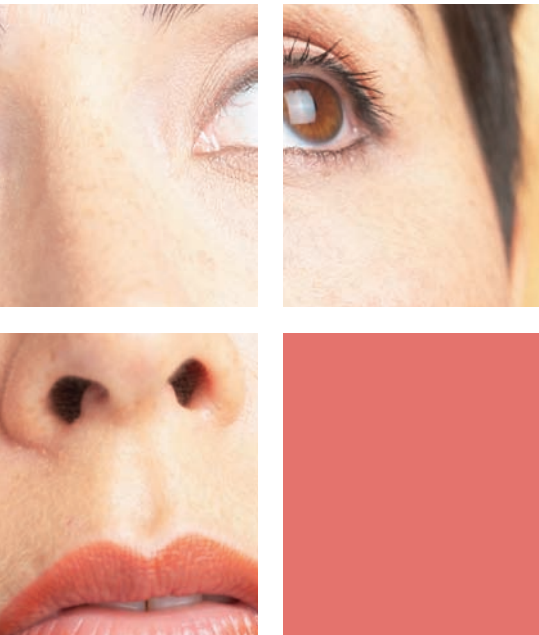
If we do need to take legal action, you will have to give us a witness statement. This means that we will write down what you have told us and ask you to sign it to confirm that it is a true record. We will then send your statement to the court and at some stage it will be seen by the person who is causing the problem.

We may need to ask you to attend a court hearing to give evidence. You do not have to do so but the most effective evidence is from people who have experienced the problem. Our leaflet 'Action to stop antisocial behaviour' explains the type of legal action that we can take.



Going to court

If you agree to come to a court hearing, we will explain to you beforehand what will happen. We will provide transport if you need it, to get you to and from the court, and we will stay with you while you are waiting to give your evidence. We will pay for any loss of earnings or extra costs that you have had to pay for someone to look after your children or other relatives.



Encouraging other people to be witnesses

If we are successful in stopping antisocial behaviour, we want to publicise this in our tenants' newsletters, annual reports and the media. We hope that this will encourage other people to be witnesses when they have a problem in their area. We will not reveal your identity in any publicity unless you give us your permission beforehand.

Phone numbers for support groups

Victim Support North Yorkshire	0845 0710871
Victim Support County Durham	01388 664111
Victim Support Bridlington	01262 401689
Victim Support National Helpline	0845 30 30 900
Hambleton & Richmondshire Community Addiction Service	01609 780486
Hambleton and Richmondshire Advocacy	01609 778652
Domestic Abuse Helpline	01325 364486

Other information

We have other antisocial behaviour leaflets available.

- A summary of our policy and procedures. (Full copies of our policy and procedures are also available if you ask for them.)
- Are you a victim of harassment or hate crime?
- Action to stop antisocial behaviour
- What should I do?

If you ask, we can supply our documents in large print, on CD, in Braille, in picture format and in languages other than English.

How you can contact us



Please write to us at:

Broadacres Housing Association

Freepost RRBZ-TATA-BYHL (you do not need a stamp)

Mount View

Standard Way

Northallerton

DL6 2YD.

Phone: **01609 767900**

or **0800 587 5291** 24 hours (free from a landline)

Fax: 01609 777017

E-mail: info@broadacres.org.uk

Website: www.broadacres.org.uk

Call in at one of our offices:

Broadacres House, Mount View, Standard Way, Northallerton, DL6 2YD

Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5.15pm | Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm

1 York Vale House, Elder Road, Northallerton, DL6 1RT

Monday, Friday and Saturday 9.30am to 12.30pm | Wednesday 2pm to 6pm

The Old Surgery, Masonic Lane, Thirsk, YO7 1PS

Monday to Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm

Woodville, 25 College Square, Stokesley, TS9 5DN

Monday to Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm

32a St. Monica's Garth, Easingwold, YO61 3GZ

Tuesday and Friday 10am to 12 noon

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