NORTH STAR

Creating homes, building futures

Title of policy:	Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy
Version:	3
Purpose:	To set out a clearly defined policy for dealing with ASB. This policy applies to all North Star tenants, residents, staff, and contractors.
Updated:	November 2026
Next review:	November 2027
By:	Director of Housing

1.0 Introduction

We recognise that left unchallenged, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) can have a significant impact on the lives of our customers and residents. We are committed to ensuring that tenants and residents can enjoy peace, quiet and security in and around their homes. North Star aims to promote a safe and secure environment by working in partnership with statutory agencies to prevent ASB.

By working in partnership, and by using collective resources, knowledge, skills, and enforcement powers, we are determined to ensure tenants and residents can enjoy safety, security, and quality of life both in their homes and in the wider neighbourhood.

We work across diverse communities and are committed to preventing and tackling ASB, ensuring we balance enforced action and intervention, with appropriate support for our most vulnerable customers. We actively promote the requirement to engage with other agencies to ensure the most appropriate prevention and resolution to ASB is embedded through our communities.

We will tackle ASB through a combined approach of prevention, enforcement, and support.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

The policy aims to:

- Ensure our customers are aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB, to help prevent and address concerns.
- Set out our commitment to collaborative working with other agencies where it is possible to do so, to resolve ASB and other community safety problems.
- Prioritising early intervention and promoting swift action to prevent issues from escalating.

- Ensure an appropriate balance between protecting our customers rights to live peacefully in their homes and communities, with helping customers to sustain their tenancies.

- Not tolerate any behaviour that is designed to intimidate, abuse, or threaten any North Star staff or anyone working on behalf of North Star. Where appropriate, we will take legal action.

- Ensure that information is treated confidentially and responsibly. However, we are clear that where an individual's safety is at risk, we are required to report our concerns to the relevant authorities.

- In operating this policy, we will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements including but not exclusive to the following:

    - Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards (2024–26), including the Neighborhood & Community and Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standards.
    - Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
    - Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 (as amended by the Crime and Policing Act 2026)
    - Crime and Policing Act 2026
    - Requirements of the Equalities Act 2010
    - Criminal Damage Act 1971
    - Crime and Disorder Act 1998, amended 2002
    - Human Rights Act 1998
    - Housing Act 1996 (Schedule 2, Grounds 2 and 14)
    - Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
    - Housing Ombudsman Code (2024)

North Star works across several local authorities. This policy overarches our approach in dealing with ASB. Some operational activities and practices will be determined by local practice.

<u>Related Policies:</u>

- Vulnerability and Reasonable Adjustment Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Hate Crime Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Tenancy Fraud Policy
- Allocations Policy

- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Lone Working
- Complaints Policy

3.0 What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

The term anti-social behaviour can mean different things to different people.

Anti-Social Behaviour is defined in law as "conduct that has caused, harassment, alarm or distress to a person". Housing related nuisance or means behaviour that affects a social landlord's ability to manage their housing.

With housing, ASB can include:

- Loud noise from neighbours
- Harassment such as verbal threats or abuse
- Vandalism, property damage or graffiti
- Fly tipping and dumping rubbish.
- Animal nuisance

Examples of ASB can include the following:

- Violence against people/property
- Verbal abuse and insults
- Intimidation/and or harassment
- Drug related ASB
- Alcohol related ASB
- Using a property for illegal or unlawful purposes
- Cuckooing (where criminals take over or use another person's home, often exploiting a vulnerable tenant, to carry out criminal activity)
- Noise nuisance such as shouting, banging, loud music.
- Any type of hate behaviour that targets identified groups due to their perceived differences.
- Nuisance from pets such as constant/persistent dogs barking
- Domestic violence/abuse
- Dumping rubbish/untidy gardens

4.0 Case Handling and Escalation

We operate a 2 tier ASB reporting system. Where we receive a low-level report in the first instance this will be recorded as an incident. If there is another report in a 6-month period, it will be escalated to an ASB case and recorded as such.

Housing Officers or Housing Support Workers will deal with all cases of ASB.

We will provide staff with the relevant training they require to carry out the role effectively. Legal training will be provided to staff on a biannual basis, but sooner should there be a change in procedure or legislation.

We will carry out cases audits to a minimum of 5% of cases. The outcome of the reviews will form the training required for staff. Call audits will be recorded and monitored by the ASB Operational Group.

Cases will be closed where possible in 30 days of the case being opened. Where this is not possible due to legal proceedings, we will place the case on hold until the case has been resolved by the Court.

All reports of ASB will be recorded and monitored on the housing management system.

We will keep clear and complete records of ASB reports and investigations, the actions taken and decisions made, communication with victims, multi-agency involvement and the reasons for closing a case, so that we can show that victims receive an effective and consistent service.

We will make victims aware of the ASB Case Review and how to request one. We will cooperate with any review, and with any concerns raised through the Police and Crime Commissioner about decisions we have taken.

The target response times are as follows:

Response Times	Category 1 (Generally Criminal Behaviour)	Category 2 (Lower level but resolvable through early intervention)
Contact the customer (Complainant)	1 Working Day	3 Working Day
Arrange to meet customer within 2 days or at a time to suit them	2 Working Days	5 Working Days
Develop an Action Plan and share with customer for their approval	5 Working Days	7 Working Days
Maintain Contact with the customer Closing Cases	Weekly 30 Days	Weekly 30 Days

5.0 Preventative Measures /Early Intervention and Support

As part of the signing up procedure, housing staff will make customers aware of the Association's ASB policy. Customers will be informed they are responsible for the behaviour of family members and visitors, and if any behaviours listed under this policy are proven, it will be deemed a breach of their tenancy and could result in legal action being taken.

North Star is committed to preventing incidents of ASB occurring and will use a range of preventative actions to achieve this. Where incidents have taken place, we recognise early intervention is key to avoid any escalation.

We will assess the information provided to us and will offer advice and support to help residents and communities to independently find a solution. We will use a combination of professional judgement and our ASB risk assessment framework to assess ASB demands.

We will seek a multi-agency approach when dealing with reported issues and will work with other agencies including police, social services, safeguarding, mental health professionals and education.

Through active participation in multi-agency forums in communities we operate in, we will maintain strategic influence over provisions for dealing with ASB and will look to provide a coordinated response with our partners on cases involving our customers. Some of the multi-agency forums we are members include Join Action Groups (JAGs) Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Multi-Agency Public Protection Conferences (MAPPA) as well as a variety of problem-solving groups.

We will encourage where appropriate for customers/residents to access our mediation services to resolve issues before escalating.

Where specific vulnerabilities have been identified, we will use our Vulnerability and Reasonable Adjustment policy to provide an individual approach to those customers who can be either suffering or perpetrating ASB.

6.0 Grounds for Possession

Whilst enforcement action is considered a last resort, it will be used where all other interventions have failed to resolve the issue.

Where ASB is found to be of a serious nature, we will use **Mandatory Ground 7A** for possession.

For an assured tenancy, anti-social behaviour (ASB) can be grounds for possession under two main categories: **Mandatory Ground 7A** for serious ASB or **Discretionary Ground 14** for nuisance or annoyance.

- **Ground 7A** is a *mandatory ground*, meaning the court **must** grant possession if the landlord can prove the conditions are met.
- **Ground 14** is a *discretionary ground*, meaning the court will decide whether it is reasonable to grant possession.

Ground 7A: Serious Anti-Social Behaviour (Mandatory Ground)

What it covers:
This ground applies to cases of serious anti-social behaviour.

Court's role:
The court must order possession if the landlord proves the statutory conditions are met.

Notice period:

- Four weeks for a periodic tenancy
- One month for a fixed-term tenancy

Right to Appeal:
Where a tenant requests an appeal, it will be heard by the **Director of Housing** or the **Head of Supported Housing**.

- The case will be presented by the Housing Officer.
- The tenant must attend the appeal hearing; if they fail to do so, the appeal will be heard in their absence.
- The outcome of the appeal will be either to uphold the notice or to cancel proceedings.

Ground 14: Nuisance or Annoyance (Discretionary Ground)

What it covers:
This ground applies if the tenant, or anyone living with or visiting them, causes nuisance or annoyance to others in the locality, the landlord, or the landlord's staff. It also applies where the tenant has been convicted of:

- Using the property for illegal or immoral purposes; or
- A serious offence committed in the locality.

Court's role:
The court may grant possession if it considers it reasonable to do so.

Notice period:
There is no statutory notice period required under Ground 14, meaning proceedings may commence immediately after notice has been served.

7.0 Enforcement

We recognise there will be occasions when mediation and working in partnership with others may not be successful. We will seek independent legal advice on these cases and where proportionate, enforcement action will be taken in partnership with statutory agencies.

North Star has a range of legal tools which we can take against perpetrators. These include:

- Housing injunctions for adults aged 18 and over, with youth injunctions available for ages 10 to 17, replacing the former Section 1 injunction (including undertakings, exclusions, and positive requirements)
- Possession proceedings
- Absolute possession powers
- Demotion of tenancies
- Closure Notices and Closure Orders on premises we own or manage (see below)
- Respect Orders against persistent adult perpetrators (see below)

We will work with our partners to invoke other legal remedies that we don't have as a social landlord including:

- Abatement Notices
- Criminal Behaviour Orders

- Dispersal Orders (police dispersal directions can now exclude a person from an area for up to 72 hours rather than 48)
- Parenting Orders
- Community Protection Warnings/notices

Closure Notices and Closure Orders

From 26 October 2026, North Star can issue Closure Notices directly on premises it owns or manages, apply to the Magistrates' Court for a Closure Order, and enforce an Order through an authorised representative, without asking the police or the local authority to do so. A Closure Notice may only be issued where the statutory ASB test is met, and a Closure Order can only be made by the Court. We will use these powers in particular where premises are being used for drug dealing, serious nuisance, criminal activity or other persistent disorder.

Authorisation. A Closure Notice must be approved and recorded by the Director of Housing

Evidence. Before a notice is issued, the case file will set out the evidence of serious nuisance or disorder; the impact on residents and the wider community; police intelligence and incident records; previous interventions and enforcement action; and why immediate closure action is necessary.

Process. We will consult the police and relevant partners; serve the Closure Notice; progress the court application within the statutory timeframe with legal support from our appointed solicitors; communicate with affected residents and other relevant parties; and monitor and enforce any Closure Order.

Timescales. A Closure Notice generally lasts 48 hours (previously 24 hours) and can be extended for up to 72 hours, subject to the statutory requirements. The application to the Court after a notice is served can now be made within 72 hours (previously 48 hours).

Appeals, liability and costs. North Star has a right of appeal against certain court decisions relating to its applications. The Act also contains provisions on liability, enforcement and costs, which will be reflected in our operational procedure.

Respect Orders

Respect Orders are a new civil order that the Court can make against a person aged 18 or over who engages in, or threatens to engage in, anti-social behaviour. North Star may apply for a Respect Order where the behaviour directly or indirectly relates to or affects our housing management functions. We will consider an application where warnings, other interventions and tenancy enforcement have failed to address persistent ASB, particularly repeated nuisance or intimidation of neighbours and other residents. An order can prohibit specified behaviours and will be tailored to the circumstances. Breach of a Respect Order can have criminal consequences.

Cuckooing and exploitation

Cuckooing is where criminals take over or use another person's home, often exploiting a vulnerable tenant, to carry out criminal activity. The Crime and Policing Act 2026 creates a specific criminal offence of cuckooing, which is not yet in force; the Government intends to commence it alongside its guidance. Whether or not the offence is in force, we will identify tenants who may be vulnerable to exploitation, recognise signs that a property is being taken over, work closely with the police and safeguarding partners, record intelligence and evidence,

and support victims rather than treating them simply as perpetrators of ASB. We will review this policy when the offence is commenced.

Fixed penalty notices and dispersal powers

The maximum fixed penalty for breach of a Community Protection Notice or Public Spaces Protection Order has increased from £100 to £500. The Act does not automatically give North Star the power to issue these penalties, so we will only do so where we are appropriately authorised. Police dispersal directions can now exclude a person from an area for up to 72 hours rather than 48, and a direction lasting longer than 48 hours must be reviewed by a police inspector as soon as reasonably practicable after the 48-hour period. Although this is a police power, we will work with the police to use it in cases of serious or persistent neighbourhood ASB.

8.0 Support for Vulnerable Victims and Perpetrators

We will:

- Assess reports made to us in accordance with our Vulnerability and Reasonable Adjustment Policy so that we can identify vulnerabilities to inform our approach.
- Deal with all incidents reported to us under this policy by taking a victim-centred approach such that the necessary support and protection will be provided to the victim.
- Where we can and appropriate, resolve at first point of contact.
- Keep in regular contact with customers until their case is satisfactorily resolved or closed.
- Where necessary, improve security, helping to protect vulnerable customers in their homes such as window locks, fireproof letter boxes, additional locks etc.
- Consider management transfers on the grounds fairly and sympathetically where this is a resolution of the case.
- Where appropriate, our staff can give evidence on behalf of the customer without revealing the identity of the tenant. This is known as 'hearsay' evidence.
- Be alert to signs that a tenant is being exploited or that their home is being used by others for criminal activity (cuckooing), and work with the police and safeguarding partners to protect them.

In addition to the above, we recognise some of our customers either victim or perpetrator many have complex needs and may require additional support.

This could include issues such as:

- Drug abuse
- Alcohol abuse
- Mental health issues or any form of disability
- Children at risk
- Exploitation, including cuckooing

Where a perpetrator of ASB has a vulnerability, we will try and ensure they have access to support to address any unacceptable behaviour. This will not be a barrier to taking any enforcement action if appropriate and proportionate.

9.0 Mediation

Mediation can be a cost-effective means of dealing with disputes between neighbours, which, if left unresolved may escalate into more serious ASB problems.

Mediation is a process whereby a**n** independent third party seeks to help neighbours in dispute reach common ground and find a mutually agreeable solution.

We provide access to independent professional mediation services for customers where both parties voluntarily choose it. Mediation is not normally appropriate in cases involving violence although we can sometimes make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

10.0 Protecting Staff

In delivering service to the community, we expect that members of the public will treat our employees and those acting on our behalf with courtesy and respect.

We w**ill** not tolerate any behaviour that is designed to threaten, intimidate or abuse our employees and those acting on our behalf. Should we deem it necessary, we will seek advice and may take legal remedies.

11.0 Partnership Working

We recognise that dealing with ASB is not the sole responsibility of any single agency. We will work closely across all local authorities with the relevant agencies and will share information with appropriate partners within the framework in which we work**.** As a landlord we have a key role in creating safe and sustainable communities and can only achieve this in partnership to deliver a comprehensive approach to local problems and priorities.

We participate in various multi-agency partnerships to resolve issues within communities where we have properties through an early intervention and collaborative approach.

Some of the partnership that we actively participate in include but are not limited to:

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Joint Action Groups (JAG)
- Problem Solving Groups (PSG)
- ASB/Criminal Damage Strategic Groups
- Multi Agency Action Groups
- Hate Crime Forums
- Criminal Damage Forums

- Task and Finish Groups
- RESPECT (tenant led group specifically for ASB)
- MAPS
- Think Family (County Durham)

12.0 Confidentiality

When investigating or making referrals regarding ASB or harassment, we will always respect individuals right for confidentiality and will comply with all requirements of the UK Data Protection legislation.

This will include the following:

- Working under established information sharing protocols when exchanging personal data with external agencies and partners
- Only passing on information to third parties and external agencies with the explicit consent unless we have a good reason to believe they are at risk or in danger of immediate harm and emergency intervention is required.

13.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

We will record and monitor all Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) reports by category, area, and outcome. Data will be reviewed quarterly by the Director of Housing to identify hotspots, repeat victims, and emerging trends. The findings will inform resource allocation, policy reviews, and training requirements.

The Government has the power to require relevant agencies, which may include housing associations, to provide ASB data, such as the number and type of cases reported, enforcement powers used, outcomes and ASB Case Reviews. We will monitor the regulations when they are published and ensure our recording allows us to report this information.

Quarterly reports will be presented to the Board, detailing ASB performance and legal assurance.

This policy will be made available in accessible formats and language

A Equality Impact Assessment has been completed under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 Equality Act 2010).

This policy will be formally reviewed by the Director of Housing every two years, or sooner if changes in legislation or data analysis indicate an earlier review is necessary.