

Remedies for anti-social behaviour

Our Commitment

Sentinel Housing Association is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour and improving the lives of residents in our neighbourhoods. There are many different remedies for anti-social behaviour which can be used by Sentinel and members of the community.

Mediation

Often disagreements with neighbours can get out of hand. Mediation is the best way of resolving these differences quickly without having to go to court. Mediation can be used on a range of different disputes including noise nuisance, anti-social behaviour, verbal abuse, parking issues and boundary disputes. It can be used when there is little evidence of anti-social behaviour or breaches of tenancy.

Mediation will only work if all the parties involved agree to take part. The Mediators will not take sides or blame people, but will understand the views of both sides. They will help people understand the effect of their behaviour and encourage and support residents to work out solutions.

Sentinel can refer cases to the Basingstoke and District Community Mediation Service and Rushmoor Mediation Service which operates in the Hart and Rushmoor areas. They are independent organisations and information will be kept private and confidential.

Tenancy enforcement

All tenants sign a tenancy agreement which lists conditions which they must abide by. If they, members of their household or invited guests, breach these conditions, then Sentinel can take legal action against them which may mean that they lose their home.

Visits & warning letters - When a complaint is received, the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator will visit the perpetrator to discuss the allegations. This is often the first time that the perpetrator realises how their behaviour affects other residents and it can stop the nuisance straight away. The Neighbourhood Co-ordinator will then send a warning letter explaining the breaches of tenancy and what can happen if more complaints are received.

Sentinel will work with perpetrators to try to help them change their behaviour. However, if the nuisance continues, Sentinel may start court action against them.

Possession proceedings – Sentinel can apply to the courts to have the tenancy ended and the tenant evicted if there are serious breaches of tenancy conditions. The judge will need to be convinced that there are serious breaches and it is reasonable to make a Possession Order. If the Judge is not convinced, they may make a Suspended or Postponed Possession Order which gives the tenant a final chance to comply with the tenancy conditions. This Order is usually for a fixed period, and if there are no more problems, no further action will be taken against the tenancy. However, if there are further problems, Sentinel can reapply to the courts to evict the tenant.

If you would like
Remedies for anti-social behaviour

in large print, braille or translated please contact the
Customer Service Centre on
0800 195 5515 from a landline or
0300 666 5515 from your mobile.



Demotion – Sentinel can apply to the County Court for a Demotion Order, instead of a Possession Order. A Demotion Order will reduce the security of tenure making the tenancy similar to a private rent tenancy. This Demotion Order will last for 12 months – if there are no further problems in that time, at the end of the 12 months, the tenancy will revert to a normal Assured Tenancy. If there is continued anti-social behaviour or any other breaches of tenancy, then Sentinel can end the tenancy (i.e. evict the tenant) without having to prove the case in court. Demotion Orders give a serious warning and are a good way of encouraging tenants to change their behaviour or they will be evicted.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) - An ABC is a voluntary written agreement between the individual who may have been involved in anti-social behaviour, Sentinel and other agencies such as the Police or school. It lists behaviour or activities which the individual agrees not to take part in. This may include verbal abuse, graffiti, criminal damage, playing loud music and even stopping them from entering a specific area. An ABC will normally last 6 months, though this can be shortened or extended depending on the behaviour. These are often used on young people.

Parenting contracts & orders – the contracts are voluntary and similar to ABCs, except they are placed on the parents of children and can help them manage their children's behaviour. The contracts include a list of behaviours or activities that parents are not to allow their children to do and some parenting support or training. If necessary, the courts can enforce these conditions by making a Parenting Order.

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) - This is an order made by the courts to protect members of the community. Like an ABC, it will list behaviour or activities which the individual must not take part in. An ASBO will last a minimum of 2 years. Breaches of an ASBO are criminal offences and may result in a maximum of 5 years imprisonment for adults. ASBOs can be made against anyone aged 10 and over. If breached, the maximum sentence for a child is 1 year in custody and 1 year supervision in the community.

Injunctions - An Injunction is an order from the courts which prevent an individual from doing specific acts or entering a specified area. They are usually used when there is violence or threats of violence. Sentinel can take out injunctions on tenants or any other person who causes a nuisance in our neighbourhoods.

An Injunction usually lasts for 1 or 2 years. The breach of an injunction is contempt of court and is punishable with a fine or up to 2 years in prison. A Power of Arrest can be attached to an injunction which means that if breached, the individual will be arrested by the Police. Injunctions are not usually given to juveniles.

Interim Court Orders - When there has been very serious anti-social behaviour involving violence or threats of violence, or if there is a significant risk to witnesses, then the court can grant an interim order. Interim orders last a short time until a full hearing and can provide protection for witnesses and members of the community. In very serious cases, the Judge can make an ex parte order which means that the defendant is not informed of the hearing. This measure is only used in serious circumstances because the defendant does not have a chance to defend themselves.

The courts can grant both interim ASBOs and Injunctions.

Who else can help?

Listed below are a number of other agencies who can help deal with complaints of anti-social behaviour.

The Police – will investigate and take action for any proven criminal behaviour. In an emergency call 999. To report anti-social behaviour call the new non-emergency number 101. For details of your local Beat manager call 0845 0454545 or go to www.hampshire.police.uk

Your local council - The Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator at your local council can deal with anti-social behaviour complaints. The Environmental Health Department of your local council can investigate complaints about noise and environmental issues. If the noise nuisance is proved, they can serve a Noise Abatement Notice.

For the Basingstoke area call 01256 844844 for the Community Safety Team and Environmental Health Department or go to www.basingstoke.gov.uk where you can report anti-social behaviour online.

For the Hart area contact the Safer Hart Team on 01252 622122 or go to www.hart.gov.uk where you can report anti-social behaviour online.

For the Rushmoor area contact the Safer Rushmoor Team on 01252 398398 or go to www.rushmoor.gov.uk where you can report anti-social behaviour online.

Mediation Services - contact Rushmoor Community Mediation Services for the Hart and Rushmoor area on 01252 549977. For the Basingstoke area contact Basingstoke and District Mediation Service on 01256 423819. Please contact your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator

Citizen Advice Bureau Offices

Fleet - 01252 617922

Basingstoke - 01256 322814

Tadley - 0118 9817760

Yateley & District - 01252 878435

Farnborough - 0845 1203752

Other leaflets on anti-social behaviour:

- Dealing with anti-social behaviour
- How to make a complaint and gather evidence about anti-social behaviour
- Leaseholders & anti-social behaviour
- Domestic violence
- Anti-social behaviour & going to court
- Support for perpetrators of anti-social behaviour
- Support for victims & witnesses of anti-social behaviour