

Support for victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour

Our Commitment

Sentinel Housing Association is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour and improving the lives of residents in our neighbourhoods. We take all reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) seriously and whenever possible will take action against perpetrators. To enable us to investigate reports of ASB and take appropriate action we often rely on residents providing evidence and working with us to tackle the issues. However, we also recognise that it can be difficult for residents to stand up to ASB, especially in cases involving intimidation or harassment. We have therefore introduced a scheme to support victims of ASB and encourage residents to take a stand. 'Safer With Sentinel' is a witness support scheme providing support and reassurance to victims and witnesses of ASB who are prepared to work with us to take action against perpetrators.

Why have an enhanced service?

We want to take tough and swift enforcement action against perpetrators of ASB, but are reliant on information from residents. We need to ensure that residents feel safe making complaints and secure in their homes and while walking around their neighbourhoods without fear of reprisals. Measures such as enhanced security at the property, CCTV and regular contact will help to reassure victims and witnesses.

Some residents make complaints but are not prepared to go that extra step and make a statement or go to court. This is often because of fear of reprisals. Residents need to feel able to take a stand against perpetrators and we have introduced a package of measures to support them if the case goes to court.

Who is eligible for 'Safer With Sentinel'?

Any person living in a Sentinel property is eligible. Also other residents may be considered if they are giving evidence in a court case on behalf of Sentinel.

Your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator will contact you if they feel that the scheme would be suitable for you. Alternatively, if you feel that you need additional support, you can contact your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator who will assess your case. There is a limit to the number of people that we can accept onto the scheme and cases will be assessed and prioritised.

What will happen next?

If you are identified as eligible for the scheme, the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator will carry out a needs assessment. This will identify any potential risks and which support or security measures would be suitable. This assessment will take into account factors which may increase your vulnerability such as physical difficulties, being an older person, living on your own.

What will happen if I am included on 'Safer With Sentinel'?

If you are included on 'Safer With Sentinel', we will design a tailor-made package of support for you from the following range of options:

- **Dedicated case worker** this will normally be the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator for your area or the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer
- **Regular courtesy & update calls** to make sure that we have all the up-to-date information and to ensure that you know what is happening with the case
- **CCTV** can be provided when appropriate. This could be covert CCTV (not visible) to try to catch perpetrators committing anti-social behaviour or overt CCTV (visible) to discourage perpetrators and provide reassurance
- **Personal security equipment** such as personal attack alarms and mobile phones for use in emergencies
- **Security measures for your home** including additional door locks, bolts, door spy holes, letter box cage and window locks
- **CommuniCare equipment can be installed**, for example, a 24 hour alarm system. Press the alarm and the call is answered by CommuniCare, even if you cannot talk, you can be identified and help can be summoned
- **Support at court hearings** including pre-hearing visits, secure waiting areas at court (where available) and accompanied journeys to and from court. You may also claim expenses incurred as a result of the court hearing such as the cost of child care, transport, and food and drink while waiting
- **After court support** will be provided to reassure residents and keep them up-to-date with breaches of any court order
- **Support referrals** can be made to specific agencies and groups who will be able to offer specialist support in areas such as victim support, rape crisis and domestic violence
- **Leaflets** a range of leaflets on different aspects of anti-social behaviour including 'Anti-social behaviour and going to court' which explains the court process

Other leaflets on anti-social behaviour:

- How to make a complaint & collect evidence
- Support for perpetrators of anti-social behaviour
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour
- Anti-social behaviour & going to court
- Leaseholders & anti-social behaviour
- Domestic violence
- Remedies for anti-social behaviour

If you would like

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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.

