

Useful Contacts

Community Safety Team	01474 33 73 28
Gravesham Borough Council	01474 33 70 00
North West Kent Racial Equality Commission	01474 36 93 29
Citizens Advice Bureau	01474 36 12 39
Gravesham & Dartford Women's Aid	01322 38 47 92
Victim Support (North Kent area)	08453 89 95 27
Kent County Council Trading Standards (consumer direct)	08454 04 05 06
Police Non Emergency	01622 69 06 90
Police Emergency	999
Graffiti Hotline	01474 33 70 00
Noise Nuisance (out of hours complaint)	01474 56 44 22
Crime Stoppers	0800 55 51 11
Neighbourhood Watch	01474 36 63 60

Anti Social Behaviour



What is Anti Social Behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour is any activity that impacts on other people in a harmful way.

Anti Social Behaviour is defined as: 'behaviour which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not from the same household.' (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

Examples of anti social behaviour include:

- violence or threats of violence (including domestic violence)
- verbal abuse
- harassment (including racial harassment)
- intimidating behaviour from groups of people
- arson or attempted arson
- drug and alcohol related incidents
- unruly children
- noise nuisance
- graffiti and criminal damage
- nuisance vehicle repairs
- abandoned vehicles
- litter and fly tipping
- problems with animals



Action by the victim

- People can take their own legal action against those they consider to be acting anti-socially, but should seek legal advice before starting proceedings.

Action by the police

- The police deal with criminal offences. They can arrest people provided there is sufficient evidence, but once charged, it is up to the Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether to prosecute or not.

Vulnerable Tenants

- We will take all practical steps to safeguard and protect tenants made vulnerable as a result of old age, physical or mental illness, learning disabilities or other special reasons, whether they are the complainants or alleged perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

Call Kent Police on 01622 690 690

- To report any non-emergency crime.



Call 999 if:

- A crime is happening now
- People are injured
- People are being threatened or are in danger
- Someone suspected of committing a crime nearby

Referral to Environmental Health Officer

- We will refer cases to the Environmental Health Officer where noise nuisance is serious and persistent.

Acceptable Behaviour Agreements

- These are voluntary undertakings made by individuals to the Council and the police to improve behaviour in specific areas. The contract is not legally binding, but may be referred to in any subsequent legal proceedings.

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO)

- We may apply for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order. Such orders can be granted by the courts and are designed to deal with persistent nuisance, harassment and criminal behaviour. A breach of an order is a criminal offence and could lead to a maximum of five years' imprisonment.

Parenting Orders

- These orders are imposed by the courts to encourage parents to take seriously their responsibilities towards their children. They can lead to parenting programmes to support parents' individual needs, and to specific requirements on parents to sort out their children's pattern of offending.

Possession Orders/Eviction

- We would only start possession proceedings against someone to recover possession of their home as a last resort. Possession proceedings need not always end in eviction, as orders may be postponed to give tenants one final chance to improve their Behaviour.

Injunctions

- Injunctions are orders of the court, usually to prevent someone from doing something. We use injunctions to prevent acts of nuisance, annoyance or harassment. A breach of an injunction is a contempt of court and can be punished by a fine or imprisonment.

We will work in partnership with other Departments and organisations to provide an effective, customer focussed anti-social behaviour service.

We recognise that anti-social behaviour is a serious problem which undermines the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. We have a major role to play in tackling anti-social behaviour. We will use the full range of powers and resources in seeking to ensure that every member of the community is able to have quiet enjoyment of their home and neighbourhood. The fundamental ethos of the Council in dealing with anti social behaviour is to combine a twin track approach of intervention and prevention through support and enforcement.

HOW WE DEAL WITH COMPLAINTS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

We receive many reports of anti-social behaviour every day, so we have to tailor our response to the urgency and persistence of the problem.

We have a Housing Management Team which, among other responsibilities, deals with low level anti-social behaviour issues. The team includes housing officers each of whom covers a geographical area and who will normally be your first point of contact if you have any difficulties.

Our Anti-Social Behaviour Case Officers, who works with the housing officers, will become involved when any case reaches the stage of legal action.

You can report anti-social behaviour to us by letter, telephone, email or in person. When you do, a member of staff will assess your case, usually your housing officer.

- First notification of anti-social behaviour
- Incident assessed as either 'serious' or 'standard'
- If the incident is serious the person complaining will be interviewed within one working day
- If the incident is standard the interview will take place within five working days
- Where possible a course of action will be agreed with the person complaining to resolve the issue
- A record of the complaint and what the complainant and the Council have agreed to do about it will be placed on file. We will ensure the complainant is kept informed of progress wherever possible.
- Where appropriate the alleged offender will be interviewed
- The appropriate follow-up action will then be taken. This will range from a simple letter to one or more of the legal remedies listed in the next section.

Please Contact:
Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1AU
Tel: 01474 33 70 00
Email: www.gravesham.gov.uk

Each complaint of anti social behaviour is dealt with on its own merits. The usual procedure is as follows:

Types of Anti Social Behaviour Remedies

Low Level Intervention

- An attempt is made to deal with the more minor nuisance by writing warning letters, telephone calls and if felt necessary visiting the home address for an informal chat.

Mediation referral

- We refer cases to a recognised mediation service who will work to get both sides to agree on a course of action.

Liaison with external agencies

- We will link up with any external agency such as the police, social services, primary care trust, and other landlords etc. to combine our expertise to deal with anti-social behaviour.

Physical improvements to a property's security

- We may be able to add additional locks, security lights, panic alarms and so on to a property.

Ending an Introductory Tenancy

- If someone has an Introductory Tenancy it is considerably easier for us to end it. We will still have to go to court, but the judge's discretion is severely limited.

Demoted tenancies

- We can 'demote' secure tenancies. This means that, provided the circumstances are sufficiently serious and the court agrees, 'demoted' tenants will lose their security of tenure and other rights for a fixed period (usually 12 months).