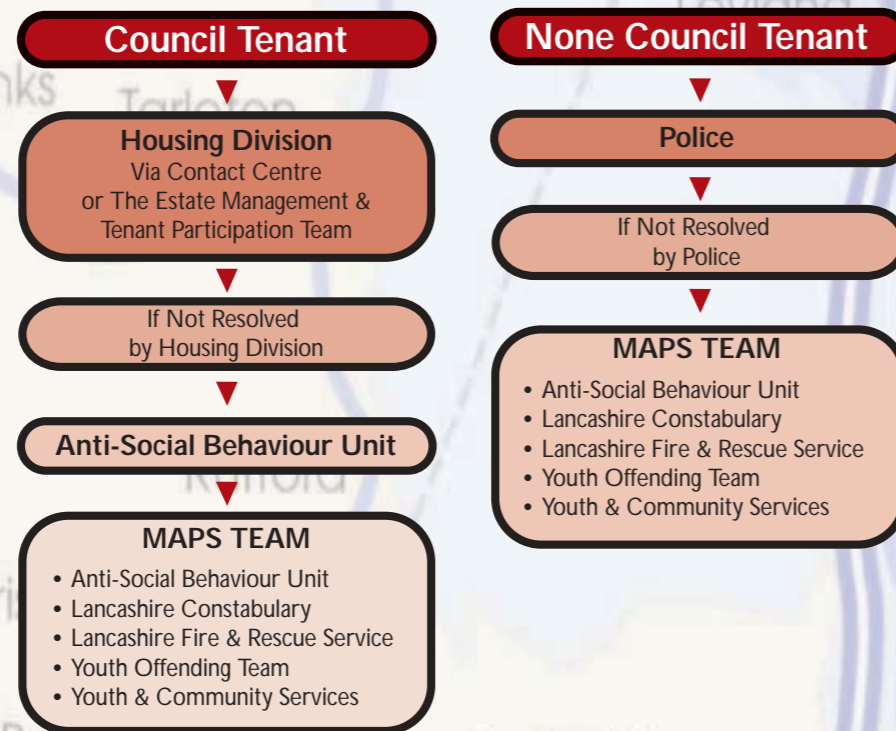




The charts below provide an illustration for both Council Tenants and none Council Tenants on how reports of Anti-Social Behaviour are dealt with.



West Lancashire District Council



### Who Do I Contact?

If you witness a crime being committed you should keep calm and dial **999**.

If you have information about crime, or criminals, then telephone Crime stoppers on **0800 555 111**.

*You can remain anonymous and may even be able to claim an award.*

For Help or advice regarding non-emergency ASB or sub criminal activity then who to contact is as follows:

- Council tenants should contact their nearest housing office or the Contact Centre.
- Everyone else should contact the Police.
- Useful telephone numbers are listed below.

#### West Lancashire District Council

Contact Centre	01695 577177
Estate Management & T.P. Team	01695 737800

#### Police

Non-emergencies	0845 125 35 45
Emergencies	999
Crime Stoppers	0800 555 111

## Anti-Social Behaviour Service Guide

*Building  
Safer  
Communities*



# Anti-Social Behaviour... ...How we deal with it.

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour is a priority for West Lancashire District Council and its community safety partners. This guide provides information for council tenants and private homeowners on how to report ASB and how we work with other agencies to provide sustainable solutions.

## What do we mean by Anti-Social Behaviour?

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) can cover a wide range of activities and situations. These range from writing graffiti, persons hanging around in gangs causing obstructions, holding noisy parties and vandalism, through to intimidation and other criminal behaviour. It can also be harassment of a person because of their:

- Sexuality
- Physical disability
- Learning disability
- Ethnicity

For legal reasons it is a term usually applied to matters involving people not of the same household. Anti-Social

Behaviour is not necessarily the same as a neighbour dispute, although these can sometimes escalate to ASB. It is sometimes referred to as 'sub criminal' behaviour. This means acts, which may not be directly illegal, and therefore a straightforward police issue but which are more than just different attitudes and standards such as are always going to be present in mixed communities.

While ASB is often thought of as problem caused by young people, this is not always the case. Tackling it is clearly seen to be a priority by many West Lancashire residents. In the last DETER national survey of English Housing, 40% of all households reported vandalism & hooliganism as a problem.

## What are we doing about it?

West Lancashire District Council has recognised the impact ASB has on individuals and communities and seeks to maximise opportunities provided by government legislation.

- A specialist A.S.B. Unit was established in 2000 to deal with cases of nuisance, anti-social behaviour and harassment.
- The Council and its Partners work together to provide a broad range of recreational opportunities, especially for young people to help minimise anti-social behaviour and develop other life skills. These are known as diversionary activities.
- The council directly funds four Police Community Support Officers from a total of 10 who are employed within West Lancashire to work alongside Police Community Beat Managers and engage directly with members of the community.



- The District Council is the lead agency for The West Lancashire Community Safety Partnership and ASB is a strategic priority.
- By setting up the Multi Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) Team in 2003 the council developed a unique inter-agency working environment. This is a purpose built office, which is shared by the council's A.S.B. Unit,



Police, Fire and Rescue, County Council and other organisations. The MAPS Team can deal with issues of ASB practically and at a local level.

## Some Common Terms

### Injunctions

An injunction is a court order that requires someone to do, or stop doing something. This may mean for example that someone is not allowed near a certain address or to contact a certain person. Injunctions are usually effective for a fairly short time, perhaps until a related case comes to trial or typically, for a three-month period.

**An example of the use of an injunction would be to protect somebody from a neighbour who was causing them alarm by threats of, or actual violence.**

### Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) and Parental Control Agreements (PCAs)

These are voluntary agreements between an individual, the council and police, though sometimes other agencies may be involved too. They contain pledges to behave in a certain manner or stop doing certain things that directly relate to the actions causing the problem. Though they are not legally enforceable, if the terms of the agreement are broken it is usual to proceed to another level of action, such as court.

**An example of when an ABC is appropriate would be when a youth has been identified as going into empty dwellings or climbing on garage roofs and perhaps taking part in minor acts of vandalism. PCAs are similar but used when the child involved is under 10 years old.**

### Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs)

These are orders that the council and police work together to obtain. Anyone over the age of ten years can be made subject to one, though for practical reasons the minimum age is usually 12. ASBOs are specific to the criminal or anti-social behaviour of an individual who regularly indulges in a manner that causes distress or alarm to other people.

**An example of when we would apply for an ASBO would be where the leader of a juvenile gang was terrorising a neighbourhood through violence, intimidation or criminal behaviour.**

### Possession Proceedings

This is court action that can lead to council tenants being evicted. Before this stage is reached the tenants involved will have had several warnings to 'mend their ways'. Evicting someone, who may have family and children, from their home, is a very serious matter. It is one that the council will have to prove that 'on the balance of probabilities' the tenants have indeed broken the terms of their agreement and that it is reasonable for the court to make the order for the council to be given the property back.

**Examples of when possession orders would be appropriate would be where a tenant had been drug dealing or carrying out other criminal activity in the dwelling. This would especially be the case if these activities had a detrimental effect on neighbours and members of the public.**

### Witness Support.

In our experience cases where members of the public are prepared to come forward as witnesses in court have the highest chance of success. We therefore aim to support anybody prepared to help in this way. We understand the need to encourage people to help us in court. A separate waiting room will be provided to minimise the chances of witnesses meeting the accused. Police or A.S.B Unit Officers stay with the witnesses whilst they are at court to provide reassurance and explanations of how things are progressing.

**Witnesses can be put off attending court because of losing wages, travel expenses or having special needs. We can therefore pay lost wages, travel expenses, arrange taxis and provide interpreters or other support where appropriate.**

### How long do these things take?

The time these different types of action can take does vary. First there is the initial complaint or referral, then an investigation. Gathering enough evidence to present to a court follows. Finally there is the actual legal process itself. In the case of injunctions this stage should only take a week or two. With ASBOs once an application has been made to court the time scale is typically around 8 weeks. Possession proceedings can take several months and the time taken varies a great deal between each case.



# Building Safer Communities