

STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL



City of  
**Stoke-on-Trent**

# Anti-Social Behaviour Statement of Policy and Procedure for Council Tenants

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Housing and Customer Services

2018

Enabling and Projects Team

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 Stoke-on-Trent City Council is committed to creating a safer, stronger and healthier city, where residents can live free from antisocial behaviour (ASB) and have the opportunities to live their lives well.

The purpose of this statement of policy and procedure is to set out how Stoke-on-Trent City Council in partnership with other agencies, will work to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour that occurs on estates and properties it owns and manages.

Anti-social behaviour committed on non-council owned / managed estates will be dealt with by specialist ASB officers.

- 1.2 Stoke-on-Trent City Council will work with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic well-being in the areas where they own and manage properties to create neighbourhoods that are safe, peaceful and great places to live and work.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council acknowledges that anti-social behaviour can impact on individuals and a community and is committed to take the appropriate action against those who to engage and continue to engage in such behaviour.

- 1.3 Throughout this policy, tenants of Stoke-on-Trent City Council will be referred to as customers.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 Stoke-on-Trent City Council is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour in a solution focused approach by:

- Ensuring evidence is collated in relation to the victim, perpetrator and location.
- Attempting to address the root causes of ASB.
- Applying the appropriate tools and powers proportionately and as quickly as possible.
- Working with complainants to keep them informed about action being taken and help them to understand the processes involved and support them through this.
- Where safe and appropriate to do so, meeting with the complainant to understand the problems and the impact
- Where safe and appropriate to do, meeting with the alleged perpetrator before we take any action
- Working with other agencies and stakeholders to share information, develop joint approaches to addressing problems and share best practice.

This policy will ensure that a consistent and fair approach is applied.

### 3. Key Principles and Service Standards

3.1 The policy contributes towards the council's 'Stronger Together' vision by;

- supporting vulnerable people in our communities to live their lives well
- enabling and supporting more people to live independently and safely, and
- working with residents to make our towns and communities great places to live by reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.

3.2 Stoke-on-Trent City Council will ensure its customers have quiet enjoyment of their homes by taking reasonable steps to make sure customers comply with the obligations of their tenancy agreement.

3.3 What customers can expect:

The council will;

- Respond to reports of anti-social behaviour within 1 to 5 working days either by telephone, visit or in writing as appropriate, dependent upon the urgency of the incident.
- Respond within 1 to 3 working day of receiving complaints of hate crime.
- Discuss the problem, give an explanation of all available options and agree a course of action.
- Provide regular updates on progress made at intervals agreed at the outset.
- Provide a named officer and contact number throughout the investigation.
- Offer referrals to support service for residents who may benefit.
- Undertake a risk assessment of home environment and provision of protection measures.
- Take appropriate action against individuals engaging in antisocial behaviour.
- Support through any legal process and beyond.
- Where appropriate, provide a partnership response to deal with the ASB.
- Communicate clearly about how and when the case closed.

To deliver a good antisocial behaviour service, customers can help by:

- Reporting incidents of ASB.
- Reporting criminal activity to the police.
- Supporting the gathering of evidence, for example, keeping a detailed diary of events in a format that is suitable for them e.g. written or recorded.
- Providing feedback on the service received so the council may make Improvements.

This policy will ensure that a consistent and fair approach is applied.

3.3 The council has a commitment to improving service standards and will undertake routine customer satisfaction surveys to ensure continual service improvement.

## 4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

- 4.1 This Policy has been informed by the legal and regulatory framework for tackling anti-social behaviour which includes:
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
  - Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
  - Housing Act 1985
  - Housing Act 1996
  - Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulation 2016
  - Environmental Protection Act 1990
  - Equalities Act 2010
  - Homes and Communities Agency's Regulatory Framework for Social Housing - Neighbourhood and Community Standards
  - Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Homelessness Strategy 2016-2020
  - Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Housing Strategy 2017-2020
- 4.2 This policy also supports the Safer City Partnership Strategy 2017-20 and associated action plan, developed on behalf of the statutory partnership and governed by the Responsible Authorities Group.

## 5. Equalities Statement

- 5.1 The council recognises that it provides housing advice and accommodation services for communities which include wide social diversity and need. It is committed to positively contribute to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between customers who have a protected characteristic and customers who do not, when providing these services.
- 5.2 In dealing with anti-social behaviour, the council will take steps to ensure that no one receives a worse service because they are from a group with protected characteristics. This policy has been designed to be fully inclusive, regardless of protected characteristics and an Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to inform the Policy.
- 5.3 From time to time, the council may ask customers to provide details of their gender, age, religion, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation in line with the protected characteristics identified within the Equalities Act 2010 to help to deliver more effective, appropriate and inclusive policies and practices. Data is used only for monitoring purposes and will be anonymised and kept securely.
- 5.4 The council aims to provide quality services that are designed to meet a wide range of different needs in the community and will regularly review them to ensure that no customers are disadvantaged.

## 6. Policy Detail

### 6.1 What is ASB?

Anti-Social Behaviour is defined in s.218A of the Housing Act 1996<sup>1</sup> as conduct that is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to some person (who need not be a particular identified person) and that directly or indirectly relates to or affects the landlord's housing management functions, or conduct that consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation owned or managed by the landlord for an unlawful purpose.

Such behaviour includes harassment, racial harassment, nuisance, domestic violence and dealing in illegal substances. Below is a non-exhaustive list of examples of anti-social behaviour:

- Noise
- Shouting or arguing
- Slamming doors
- Failing to keep control of dogs and other pets
- Offensive behaviour
- Car repairs
- Abandoned vehicles
- Dumping of rubbish, litter and unwanted household items
- Criminal activity – supply/possession of drugs or prostitution
- Large groups of youths congregating
- Intimidation or rowdy behaviour
- Untidy gardens
- High hedges
- Damage to property

### 6.2 Responsibilities of tenants

The tenancy agreement details the standards of behaviour Stoke-on-Trent City Council expects of the tenant, members of their household and visitors. Tenants must adhere to all the terms and conditions set out in their tenancy agreement, in particular the obligations relating to:

- illegal activity
- nuisance and annoyance and harassment
- condition of property
- gardens
- rubbish and unwanted items
- pets and other animals

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<sup>1</sup> S.218A(8) substituted for s.218(8) and (8A) by Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2014 c.12 Sch.11(1) para 23 (March 23, 2015)

Whilst some everyday noise can be unavoidable, everyone has the right to enjoy a quiet life within their own home.

### **6.3 Incidents of racial and other harassment**

If you have been a victim of racial harassment or any other form of harassment, Stoke-on-Trent City Council will aim to:

Work in partnership with Challenge North Staffs, a specialist advice service that also provides an advocacy service to support victims of racial harassment or any forms of hate crime.

Hate Crime is defined as any criminal offence committed against a person or their property that is motivated by hatred of someone because of their:

- Race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality or national origin
- Religion or belief
- Gender or sexual identity
- Sexual orientation
- Disability (including disability due to mental health)
- Age

Hate Crime can take many forms and can include physical attacks, damage to property, theft, offensive graffiti, threats, intimidation and bullying.

Challenge North Staffs attend events and deliver education and prevention programmes across all schools throughout the city to raise awareness and encourage the reporting of hate crime.

### **6.4 Domestic Abuse**

The council will not tolerate domestic abuse by or against our customers. We will work with partner agencies to take the appropriate action against perpetrators using the tools available to us under the Housing Act 1985 and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

## **7. Prevention and Support**

### **7.1 Prevention of Anti-Social Behaviour**

Prevention is an essential part of Stoke-on-Trent City Council's approach to anti-social behaviour and we have a number of initiatives that focus on prevention, such as:

- At the time of signing a tenancy, the council will ensure that all prospective tenants are aware of their responsibilities under the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement. Staff will ensure the tenancy agreement is explained to the tenant clearly so that they fully understand the terms of the agreement and how the council will approach any breaches of the tenancy agreement.



- The council aims to make all allocations ‘intelligently’ where, amongst other factors, the broader needs of the wider community will be considered when allocating a property. Any history of anti-social behaviour or hate crime of the applicant or in the local area will be considered.
- The council may undertake specific works to facilitate better use of open space, resolve local issues, reduce anti-social behaviour, improve security or facilitate better community integration. This may be funded through the Neighbourhood Environmental Improvement Schemes where bids are invited from local communities. Local communities will be encouraged to develop ideas for improvements to their local area working with council officers, police, the fire service or other local stakeholders.

## **7.2 Supporting Victims and Witnesses**

The council will provide a supportive approach when working with victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour, to ensure that all residents are able to report incidents of ASB to us with confidence. We will treat victims and witnesses sympathetically and sensitively, respecting their confidentiality and keeping them informed of the process at all times. We will also use appropriate security measures to ensure safety, sign post and refer to external support services and specialist agencies as required, and explain court processes to witnesses and support their attendance at court where necessary.

Throughout the investigation, from initial report through to court and beyond regular contact with the victim and witnesses will be maintained to ensure they are informed of progress.

## **7.3 Rehabilitation of perpetrators and support for vulnerable groups**

Perpetrators of ASB will be offered appropriate support to assist in resolving problems and changing their behaviour on a long term basis. This could include diversionary activities. Mental health conditions and other vulnerabilities will be taken into consideration when identifying any additional support requirements. Where specific vulnerabilities are identified, we will endeavour to provide a tailored approach, both for victims and perpetrators. This may include referrals to other to other agencies dependent upon the circumstances of the individual.

# **8. Partnership Working**

## **8.1 Key Partners**

Key partners in the effective resolution of anti-social behaviour may include;

- Community Safety Teams / Locality Teams.
- Police.
- Fire and Rescue Service.
- Voluntary Organisations.
- Residents Associations and Community Groups.
- Local schools.
- Private Sector Landlords and other housing providers.

As part of Stoke-on-Trent City Council's commitment to partnership working, Housing Services, will, where appropriate, share information with partners (e.g. the Police) for the purposes of prevention and detection of nuisance and anti-social behaviour. All information shared will be in accordance with relevant guidance and legislation.

## **8.2 Information Sharing / Confidentiality**

ASB is difficult to resolve in isolation, as such our partner agencies help with intelligence gathering and resolution of problems. ASB can have an impact on many areas within the community and no single agency can be seen as holding or being capable of providing all the resolutions.

A number of other agencies may be worked with to enhance the effectiveness of responses. A co-ordinated multi-agency response is more effective in tackling complex issues.

Through the One Staffordshire Information Sharing Protocol, the council will, where appropriate, share information with partners (e.g. the Police) for the purposes of prevention and detection of crime and disorder.

Confidentiality is fundamental to developing a relationship of trust with those individuals who report ASB. It is guaranteed therefore that the identity of the person who supplied the information will remain confidential, unless their permission to reveal it to the other agency has been granted.

## **8.3 Sharing information with tenants and the wider community**

Sharing information with the wider community about what has been done to tackle anti-social behaviour can:

- Reassure residents
- Act as a deterrent
- Encourage other to report problems in the future

Stoke-on-Trent City Council will use local media coverage, targeted leafleting and other publicity as considered appropriate on a case by case basis.

## **8.4 Working with the Community**

Where levels of ASB are affecting the wider community the investigating officers will liaise closely with local residents associations, community groups and tenant representatives to try to resolve the issue. Communities are encouraged to consider ways to resolve anti-social behaviour and will be supported to make a bid to the Neighbourhood Environmental Improvement Schemes to help address environmental issues which could help to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour, for example fencing or parking programmes, gating, lighting or additional security measures.

## 9. Supporting our Staff

### 9.1 Protection of Staff

The council takes the safety of all staff seriously, and this extends to any person working for contractors or sub-contractors who may be required to attend the property. Any threatening, abusive behaviour or assault aimed at staff or contractors will be treated as a serious act of anti-social behaviour.

Tenants who are deemed to pose a potential threat will be subject to appropriate restrictions to the management of their tenancy until the case has been closed. This may include two person visits, restrictions in the methods available to contact staff and interviews only being undertaken at an agreed local centre.

### 9.2 Training of staff in dealing with ASB

The council will ensure that Housing Services staff are appropriately trained to deal with ASB matters, in accordance with their job roles and responsibilities.

## 10. Reporting ASB

### 10.1 How to report ASB

A customer may report any incidences of ASB either;

- On-line [https://www.stoke.gov.uk/info/20050/problems\\_in\\_my\\_neighbourhood](https://www.stoke.gov.uk/info/20050/problems_in_my_neighbourhood)
- To their Housing Officer
- To their Local Centre
- One Stop Shops or other council offices.
- Telephoning the council on its dedicated ASB number: 0800 561 5610
- Telephoning the council on its general enquiry number: 01782 234234
- By email to [enquiries@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@stoke.gov.uk)

A customer may report Hate crime by;

- Contacting Challenge North Staffs on 0330 1111999.
- Filling out an On-line self-reporting form <https://challengenorthstaffs.org/self-reporting-form/>
- Texting Hate + your message to 07537414477 (standard message rate)

If a tenant or other resident is in any immediate danger they should contact the police on 999; if the issue relates to non-urgent ASB acts, they should call the police on their non-emergency number 101.

### 10.2 Processing a complaint of ASB

All complaints of ASB will be investigated promptly as defined within the council's agreed service standards. Risk assessments are used to categorise ASB to determine the urgency of the response required, in line with;

- Type
- Occurrence
- Vulnerability of the victim
- Severity and impact on the victim
- Potential risk

Complainants/victims will be kept informed of developments in their case (in line with Data Protection Guidance), providing the complainant with regular updates as part of an agreed action plan.

### 10.3 Case Closure

ASB cases will be closed in the following circumstances;

- The complaint has been resolved to the victim's satisfaction.
- The behaviour of the perpetrator has been modified and no longer causes a nuisance.
- The perpetrator has moved out of the area.
- There is no evidence to support incidences of ASB

The complainant and all other relevant parties will be informed once a case has been closed and the issue resolved, or if no further action is going to be taken by the council and the reasons why.

## 11. What Action Can the Council Take

### 11.1 Housing Management

As a landlord the city council has additional powers to deal with ASB that is caused either at the property or in the locality where the perpetrator is a city council tenant, or is caused by anyone living in or visiting the property including children. This is a breach of the tenancy agreement.

The action will be considered in the context of the seriousness of the anti-social behaviour, the evidence available to support tenancy action, the vulnerabilities of the perpetrators, complainant and local community and the other formal and informal actions which are being pursued. Each case will be considered individually and the most appropriate action taken.

Issues that could reasonably be expected to be resolved through tenancy management processes through the provision of appropriate advice/instruction, warnings, supportive interventions and independent mediation, include (but are not limited to) those listed below;

- Noisy neighbours
- Car parking disputes
- Property/Boundary disputes
- Damage to property
- Untidy gardens
- High hedges/overhanging trees and shrubs

- Dog fouling
- Uncontrolled animals/pets
- Inappropriate use of premises (for car repairs, storing scrap etc.)
- Abandoned cars

## 11.2 Informal Action

As a first step, the council encourages tenants who are experiencing problems with neighbours to try and settle the dispute amicably. Often people do not realise that they are causing an annoyance. By involving the council straight away, this may make the neighbour feel threatened and may lead to a worsening situation.

However, the council would not expect the tenant to take this step if they feel intimidated or uneasy about approaching the neighbour directly.

Once an issue is reported to the council every effort will be made to resolve the problem as swiftly as possible. Some actions to achieve this may include:

Diversionsary Activities	Targeted work with alleged perpetrators of ASB will be attempted to divert them away from negative behaviours and engage them in more positive activities. Examples of which would be organised youth groups involving activities and sports.
Support	Some ASB can be caused as a result of unmet support needs; therefore work with families and individuals to address needs will be undertaken to help reduce ASB and improve the health and wellbeing of those affected.
Referrals to other agencies	Where specialist support is required referrals may be made to other agencies to support individuals and families to meet their needs.
Acceptable Behaviour Contracts / Undertakings	A perpetrator may be invited to voluntarily enter into a written agreement with the council setting out how the perpetrators' behaviour will need to be modified. Whilst this has no legal basis, it demonstrates a willingness to resolve matters without resorting to enforcement.
Mediation	Residents will be encouraged to resolve their issues in an amicable and conciliatory manner whenever possible. Mediation will primarily be offered to address low level ASB, issues arising from incompatible lifestyles and instance where there are counter allegations made.

If the perpetrator/s fail/s to engage with early resolution measures or does not support activity to alter their behaviour the council will progress with enforcement action at the appropriate level.

### 11.3 Formal Action As A Result of a Tenancy Breach

<b>Notice of Seeking Possession</b>	Where ASB constitutes a serious breach of tenancy a Notice of Seeking Possession (or Notice to Terminate for Introductory or Demoted Tenancies) may be issued. The notice will set out the breaches that have occurred and the potential consequences if the behaviour is not modified.
<b>Possession Order</b>	Where the tenant fails to address the ASB and the breaches of their tenancy a possession order may be sought from the courts This is usually a last resort when warnings and other actions have not resolved the issue.
<b>Absolute Grounds for Possession</b>	Outright possession may be sought in cases where the tenant has been found guilty of ASB or criminality by the courts. Court discretion in these cases has been removed.
<b>Demoted Tenancies</b>	A demoted tenancy may be applied for via the courts to remove some rights from secure tenants, specifically in relation to right to buy, tenant improvements and taking in lodgers. A demoted tenancy can also be ended with a Notice to Terminate.
<b>Extension to Introductory Tenancy</b>	The introductory tenancy may be extended by a further six months (beyond the usual 12 months) where the tenant has not adhered to the requirements of the Tenancy Agreement. This will restrict the rights of the tenant in relation to improvements, right to buy and successions.
<b>Notice to Terminate</b>	A Notice to Terminate may be issued to tenants on an Introductory or Demoted tenancy where the ASB constitutes a serious breach of tenancy. The Notice will give the tenant four weeks' notice – after which we may apply to the Courts for a Possession Order.
<b>Rehousing</b>	In some cases it may be appropriate to consider rehousing either the complainant or the perpetrator. In these instances options will be considered which best meet the needs of the individuals and the local community.
<b>Future Housing Applications</b>	Evictions as a result of ASB may affect future applications for council housing.  In addition, individuals who are evicted as a result of ASB will be considered to have made themselves intentionally homeless.

## 11.4 General Legal Action

As well as the powers under the Housing Act in relation to tenancy breaches, the council may seek to use the wider powers that may be applied regardless of tenure.

<b>Injunction</b>	An Injunction may be passed against any person aged over ten who has, or has threatened to, engage in ASB.
<b>Community Protection Warning and Community Protection Notice</b>	<p>A Community Protection Warning (CPW) may be issued to a person engaged in ASB setting out how the perpetrators' behaviour will need to be modified.</p> <p>A Community Protection Notice (CPN) may be issued to a perpetrator who has failed to adhere to the Community Protection Warning and the conduct is having a detrimental effect, of a persistent or continuing nature, on the quality of life of those in the locality.</p> <p>Breach of the Community Protection Notice may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and fine of up to £100 being issued or a further fine if a conviction is sought.</p>
<b>Fixed Penalty Notice</b>	These can be served for failure to comply with a CPN or failure to comply with a Public Space Protection Order. They can also be used for dog fouling and fly tipping (under separate legislation).

## 12 Performance

### 12.1 Monitoring and Measuring Performance

Levels of ASB across the city are monitored on a regular basis. Where communities have experienced issues associated with anti-social behaviour this information is shared across Housing Revenue Account Services and particular consideration is given to future allocations to the area and appropriate estate management. This forms part of the Intelligent Lettings approach set out within the council's Allocations Policy.

Performance and delivery of the service is monitored and reported to the Housing Management Team at the monthly performance meeting.

In addition, any issues relating to performance will also be reported to the Housing Revenue Account Tenants' Board and escalated to the Housing Revenue Account Management Board if necessary.

## 12.2. Data Collection

Anonymised data is collected for performance monitoring reports. Reports categorise cases by risk level and by reported type. This information is used to understand the nature and level of issues within council-owned estates, to enable improvements in service delivery.

Further analysis is done on the enforcement action taken in order to understand the effectiveness of this action.

All data collection is done in a manner that complies with Data Protection legislation.

## 13. Appeals and Complaints

### 13.1 Making a Complaint

If a customer is not satisfied with how an ASB case has been dealt with they may register a complaint through the council formal Complaints Procedure. Customers who want to make a general complaint or comment about the ASB process can also use this procedure. Details are available from any council office or online ([www.stoke.gov.uk](http://www.stoke.gov.uk)). In line with this procedure, the initial complaint will be acknowledged in writing within two working days and information will be provided about who is dealing with the complaint. The council will aim to respond within 10 working days. If the complaint is more complicated, it may take longer to sort it out but the complainant will be kept informed.

### 13.2 Contacting the Housing Ombudsman

If customers remain dissatisfied with the outcome following the completion of the complaint's process, the case can be considered by the Housing Ombudsman who will ensure that the decision is in line with the principles set out within this policy.

### 13.3 Community Trigger

Aside from making a formal complaint, any victim of ASB, who has made three or more reports within a six month period but feels they have not had a satisfactory response, can request a 'Community Trigger'. If the threshold is met, a review will be led by a local multi-agency panel which has the power to make recommendations to public bodies.

Requests for a 'Community Trigger' will be managed through the Safer City Partnership in line with agreed process. More information on Community Triggers can be found on;

[https://www.stoke.gov.uk/directory\\_record/333313/community\\_trigger\\_procedure/category/6/housing\\_and\\_neighbourhoods](https://www.stoke.gov.uk/directory_record/333313/community_trigger_procedure/category/6/housing_and_neighbourhoods)



### **13.4 Appeals against a Community Trigger Decision**

If an applicant or their third party representative is dissatisfied with the way in which the review was carried out they may appeal in writing, stating the grounds for appeal.

An appeal may be made on the following grounds only:

- a) The manner in which bodies have dealt with an application; or
- b) Carried out the anti-social behaviour review itself

An appeal against the decision that the threshold has not been met may not be made.

Appeals are heard by the Chair of the Responsible Authorities Group (statutory community safety partnership) and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for community safety.

The outcome of an appeal is final.

## **14. Information Sources**

- 14.1 It is intended that customers will have access to a range of information about how the council deals with ASB and how to report ASB, through appropriate literature and receive advice and assistance from the appropriate officers. Examples of this are;

- Website link  
[https://www.stoke.gov.uk/info/20050/problems\\_in\\_my\\_neighbourhood](https://www.stoke.gov.uk/info/20050/problems_in_my_neighbourhood)
- ‘Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour’ leaflet

- 14.2 The council has a corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy that is intended to provide advice and guidance to all residents of the city, not just council tenants.

## **15. Financial Implications**

- 15.1 Currently the ASB service delivery is funded from the Council’s general fund budgets although new structure proposals will mean the Housing Revenue Account will fund a new service that deals with Council tenants ASB specifically.

## **16. Consultation**

- 16.1 This policy has been subject to a consultation process including tenants via an on-line survey, representatives from the Housing Management Board, Tenant Board, elected members and council officers from Housing Services and Legal Services.

## **17. Links to Other Policies**

- 17.1 The Anti-Social Behaviour Policy for Council Tenants is closely aligned to, and supports, the delivery of a range of strategic plans and their associated policy framework, including;

- Stronger Together Strategic Plan 2016-20 – The Council's Priorities and Objectives
- City Council Corporate Anti-Social Policy (Draft)
- Housing Strategy (2017)
- Tenancy Strategy (2013-2016)
- Tenancy Agreement (2017)
- Tenancy and Estate Management Policy (2017)

## Key Contacts

**For comments in relation to this policy please contact the Enabling and Projects Team:**

- Telephone: 01782 238800 (office hours only)
- Email: [housing.strategy@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:housing.strategy@stoke.gov.uk)
- Post: Housing Services Enabling and Projects Team, Floor 2, Civic Centre, Glebe

## Glossary / Definitions

Throughout this policy document, it is inevitable that words or phrases are used that are readily understood by some readers, but which are new to other readers and their meaning is not immediately apparent. The meanings of some words / phrases used in this document are given below.

**Demoted Tenancy** - secure tenancy can be demoted in cases of anti-social behaviour. The tenant will lose some of the rights of a secure tenant.

**Housing Revenue Account (HRA)** – a ring fenced account of income and expenditure that every local authority housing department must maintain. Income to the HRA is predominantly through rental income and expenditure is broadly focussed on repairs and maintenance, supervision and management costs, financial charges and other costs associated with the delivery of housing related services.

**Introductory Tenancy** – are usually a 12 month probationary tenancy offered to new tenants. Introductory tenants do not have the full rights of a secure tenant.

**One Staffordshire Information Sharing Protocol** – The Protocol provides good practice for the sharing of information between Partners in Staffordshire, in line with relevant legislation. It provides a framework for the exchange of information to support the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the community and ensures that such information is exchanged in a lawful manner. The protocol outlines the purposes for sharing information, the powers that organisations have to share information, the role of partners and what can be expected from them, the process for sharing and scheduled review dates.

**Professional Witnesses** – is employed and paid by the city council to observe and record incidences of ASB and act as a witness to the act in court if required.

**Tenants Board** – the tenant group of twelve independently appointed tenants responsible for overseeing scrutiny of Housing Revenue Account Services and the key group for consultation.