

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB): A Guide for Tenants



Introduction

Circle Voluntary Housing Association (VHA) wish for all tenants and residents to feel safe in their homes and communities. We understand the impact that suffering anti-social behaviour (ASB) can have. Where ASB is reported to us, we will investigate the situation and take action where we feel it is appropriate.

The factsheet provides a summary of the types of behaviour we consider to be ASB, the key role that residents take in preventing and tackling the issue, how tenants and residents can report ASB to us and the types of actions we will take in response.

Further information is available at www.circlevha.ie



What is ASB?

The law does not give us a list of behaviours which are ASB. Instead, it says that ASB can be things that cause someone a nuisance or annoyance or stops someone from enjoying their home.

The behaviour must also be unreasonable. There may be times where something is happening that is causing an annoyance, but it would be wrong to consider it to be a breach of someone's tenancy agreement.

We look at the circumstances of each report to decide whether it is unreasonable or not, considering things like how often the behaviour is happening, how long it lasts for, the

times of day it occurs and the impact it has on the person who is reporting it.

An Example:

Your next-door neighbour has just moved in and is doing some DIY. They have let you know that there will be some banging between the hours of 10am and 2pm. They say it will last for around 10 days.

We would be unlikely to deal with this as ASB. Whilst the banging may be causing you annoyance, the hours it is happening are reasonable, it is not going on for too long, the neighbour has let you know and the reason for them doing it is understandable.

What behaviours may be ASB?

The table below shows the types of behaviour we may consider to be ASB and those we may not.

WHAT WE MAY CONSIDER TO BE ASB	WHAT WE ARE UNLIKELY TO CONSIDER TO BE ASB
Foul and abusive language (swearing)	Parking disputes
Threats of violence and/or actual violence	Noise arising from ordinary living activities
Repeated, loud, unreasonable music/other noise during unsociable hours	Groups of people (unless they are being abusive, causing damage or committing a crime).
Aggressive behaviour from pets	Cooking smells
Hate-related incidents.	Neighbour disagreements
Graffiti	One-off parties
Vandalism	Children playing
Serious Criminal Activity	Personal lifestyle differences between households



Being a Good Neighbour

THERE ARE LOTS OF THINGS THAT RESIDENTS CAN DO TO PREVENT ASB FROM OCCURRING IN THE FIRST PLACE.

We encourage all our residents to be respectful to each other, thinking about the impact their behaviour may have on others, being understanding of diverse cultures/lifestyle choices and being willing to compromise where needed.

Practical examples of behaviour which make a good neighbour include:

- Try and reduce the noise that could disturb others, particularly when living in an apartment. This could include being careful not to play TV or music too loud, limiting the use of domestic appliances (like washing machines) during the evening/night-time, making sure doors do not slam shut etc.
- Be considerate about the use of shared spaces, such as gardens, corridors, and parking areas.
- Encourage children and young people to be respectful of others and not to play/act in a way that could cause disturbance.
- Make sure any pets do not cause a nuisance to others.
- Make sure any visitors are respectful to other neighbours.
- Listen to concerns that other neighbours may have and be willing to make changes to behaviour which may be affecting others.

What you can do if you are experiencing problems

In many of the situations reported to us, the best approach is for neighbours to speak to each other and try to find their own solution. This is especially true if the problem might be something that your neighbour does not realise is causing you a problem. Simply making them aware may be enough to stop the issue.

We recommend speaking to your neighbour only if you feel it is safe to do so and would also offer the following tips that can make speaking to your neighbour easier:

- Make sure you are calm when you speak to them – it is often better to speak after the problem has ended.
- Think about what you are going to say before you speak to them.
- Be polite – remember, the person may not be aware that their behaviour is causing you disturbance.
- Listen to what they have to say.
- Try and agree a solution together.
- If the conversation begins to get heated or unhelpful, remain calm and remove yourself from the situation.

Making a Report

If you believe that the problem you are having is ASB and it is not something you can sort with your neighbour yourself, then please contact us. You can make a report in the following ways phone, email, website, tenant portal.

If the problem involves criminal behaviour, you should also contact the Garda on 999 or through the Garda Confidential Line - 1800 666 111.

What you can expect from us

When we receive a report, we will decide whether it meets our definition of ASB. We will take details from you to help us make this decision and may take other steps to properly understand the problem.

If we decide that the report is not ASB, we will explain this to you, including the reasons why, and offer any advice which may be helpful.

Where we decide a report is ASB we will agree next steps with you, including how we stay in touch with you and keep you updated on our actions. These next steps may also include things we need you to do to support the management of your case.



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