

Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Output Report

January 2025

Introduction

The Tenant Board are committed to lead on two scrutiny projects per fiscal year. In April 2024, the Board decided their scrutiny work plan and as well as their involvement in the Annual Report to Tenants and the Tenant Handbook, they also voted on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Complaints to be scrutinised.

The Tenant Board made the decision to review ASB after reviewing transactional and perception satisfaction scores on our Anti-Social Behaviour service. Additionally, In the Tenant Satisfaction Survey (TSM), the Board were interested to understand why in the Q4 2023 survey, satisfaction was considerably higher in Mid Suffolk (77%) compared to Babergh (49%).

According to the TSM data between Q1 and Q4 (2023-24), satisfaction had increased from 49% to 62% (average of both councils), however, this increase in satisfaction was mainly contributed by Mid Suffolk Increase in satisfaction.

The Board also reviewed the Tenant Performance Dashboards, which include the transactional data for ASB, which is surveys that are conducted with tenants who have experienced the ASB service.

The board were informed that the results of this survey can vary greatly month by month depending on the outcome of the ASB case, how cases have been closed in each month and how many tenants participated in the survey.

It was understood that although there is an explainable variety in the results, they still wanted to understand why some tenants who did complete the survey were dissatisfied. Additionally, if those who complete the survey are dissatisfied, what is the average tenant experience when reporting ASB.

Methodology

Desktop Review

To understand the initial improvements needed of the ASB service, and determine the scope of their scrutiny activity, the tenant board undertook a desktop review of data from the ASB transactional Survey and the ASB results in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey.

The Tenant board were split in two groups in which half reviewed a year and six months' worth of statistics from the ASB transactional Survey and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey.

The other half of tenants reviewed the comments made by tenants on the ASB transactional survey between April 2023- September 2024. Both groups reviewed these documents individually and discussed their findings at the Tenant Board meeting in Decembers Board meeting.

They identified that the underlying areas that need improvement in the ASB service were:

- Resources
- ASB Procedure
- Roles, Responsibilities and powers available

- Communication

The Tenant Board specifically were interested in conducting a Customer Journey Mapping exercise with tenants who had personal experience of Babergh and Mid Suffolk's Anti-Social Behaviour Service to get some more qualitative data from those who have experienced ASB and our services to understand where we could make improvements.

The Tenant Board also wanted to investigate the above themes through workshops to understand from other tenants how we can improve these areas of the ASB Process.

Customer Journey Mapping

We sent an email to all tenants who had a closed ASB case between September- December 2024. As an incentive and thank you for their participation we also offered a £10 gift voucher to those who participated.

We had 4 tenants who expressed an interest in being involved in the Customer Journey Mapping Activity, 1 of which had two experiences within this period and therefore we had 5 Customer Journey Maps (CJM's) in total.

We conducted telephone interviews with the tenants and wanted to understand their experience of the whole case. We asked for the following information, with each section giving detail to their emotional experience throughout their ASB case.

- Reporting
- All communication touch points
- Risks
- Outcome

The interviews were very detailed and lasted between 45 minutes- 1.5 hours long.

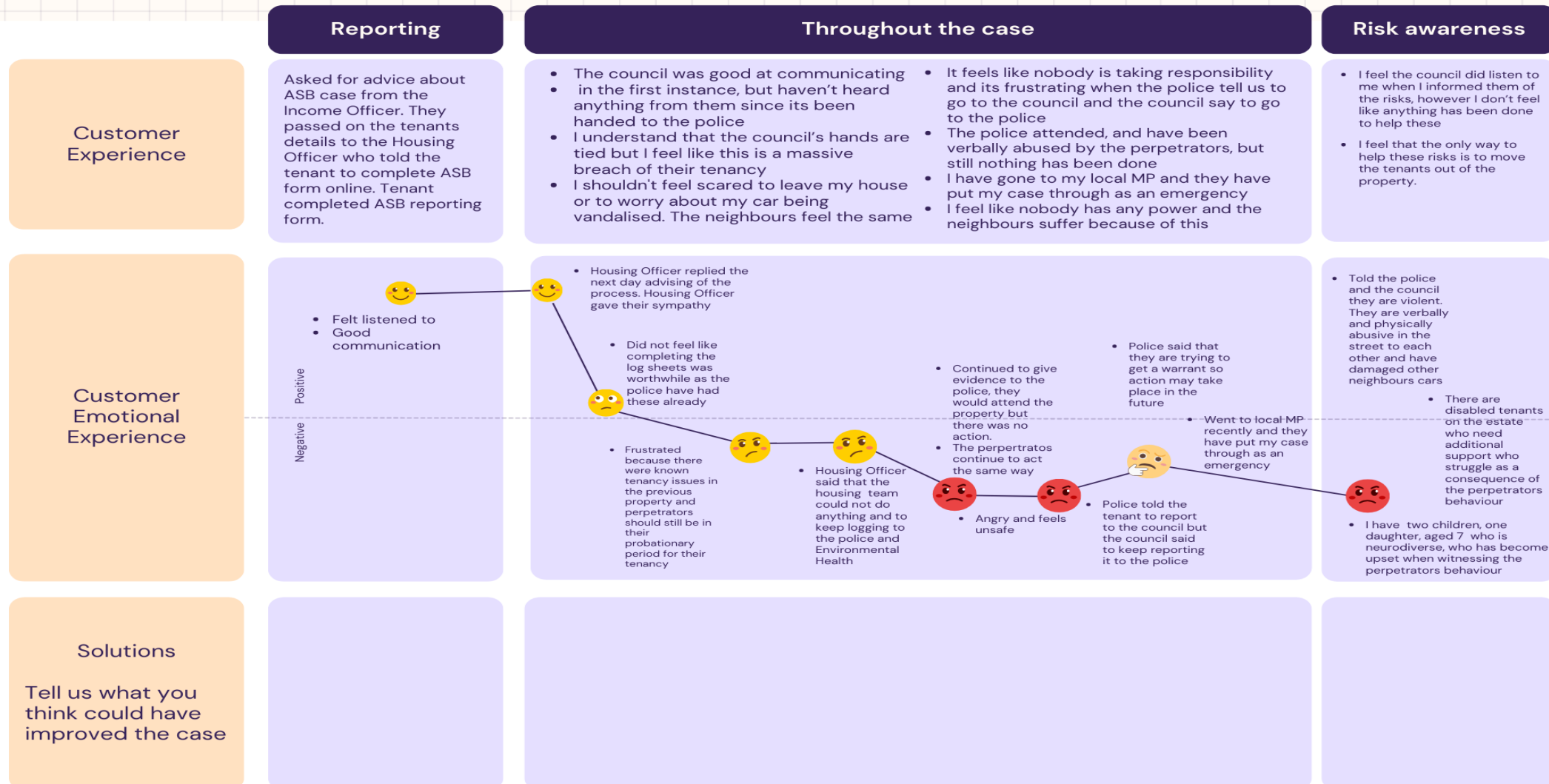
We then designed the layout of the CJM's based on the tenant interviews. The CJM's were split in to reporting, throughout the case, final outcome or risks.

While on the phone to some tenants we found that with many cases the tenants felt that their case was still open and should not have been closed as they were not informed of their final outcome.

Using what the tenants had told us; we included a line graph to the CJM to show how tenants felt about their ASB case changes as the case proceeded.

The top section of the CJM showed key points throughout the case and the bottom section labelled "solutions" was left blank as this would be used as an activity in the workshops to understand what we could have done to improve each section on the case. Please find example of CJM on the page below.

ASB Customer Journey Map- 4



Recruitment for Focus Groups

The focus groups were advertised in the December and January edition of My Home Bulletin, a newsletter that goes to all tenants which we have an email address for. The newsletter is sent to under 6000 tenants. As an incentive and to show our appreciation for tenant's time we offered a £10 gift voucher for attending the on-line focus group and a £20 voucher for the in-person group as well as expenses incurred.

Online Focus Group

8 Tenants and 4 housing employees participated in the online focus group session on the 3rd February 2025. This session ran for 2 hours in the evening to give those who were not available during the day to have their say on our ASB service.

This focus group had a wide discussion on the resources available to the council and went through an in-depth conversation around the Councils eviction procedure regarding ASB.

As a group, the tenants reviewed two Customer Journey Maps and gave their suggestions on how we could improve these cases.

There were then some recommendations made at the end of the session.

In Person Focus Group

8 Tenants, 13 staff members, who are involved with dealing ASB, and a councillor attended an in person focus group at Pinewood Community Hall on the 5th February 2025. The participants were split into 4 groups with a mix of tenants and staff on each table.

The first 2 hours of the focus group were informational where the group learnt about the Housing Regulator Consumer Standards, the ASB process at Babergh and Mid Suffolk and available resources used at the councils.

In tables, the groups were asked to identify which ASB categories went to which team. They were presented with 15 ASB categories and had to identify whether this would be dealt with by, Housing, Neighbourhood Team, Community Team, Domestic Abuse Specialist, the Police or Environmental Health. This was a warmup exercise to get the participants to start thinking about the different reporting routes of ASB. It was found from this exercise that for staff and tenants it was confusing to understand which case belonged to which team.

Participants were then presented with the ASB transactional Survey results from the last year. This included the correlational data, the breakdown of results and any re-occurring themes that appeared in the data.

In their tables, participants completed the Customer Journey Mapping exercise, where each table was given a Customer Journey Map with a description of the ASB Case. The groups then went through the case and identified what improvements could have been made in the reporting stages, throughout the case, final outcome and overall risks. This exercise contributed to the total list of recommendations.

The group was presented with the ASB resources from 3 different Housing Providers: Colchester Borough Homes, Northeast Derbyshire Council and East Suffolk Council.

Interest from the group was towards Colchester Borough Homes Neighbourhood Toolkit, which details how to be a good neighbour and early steps on how to communicate with your

neighbours about ASB. Participants also liked the Derbyshire Council webpage on ASB which details all categories of ASB, who to report ASB to and a wealth of information on victim support.

The final group activity for the session was to write a full list of recommendations to improve the ASB service in housing. When a full list was written they needed to rank their 1st, 2nd and 3rd most impactful recommendations.

All four lists were used to create the recommendations for the in-person session. The scores of the ranked recommendations can be found below.

Results

Demographic Data

There were 4 tenants that took part in the CJM exercise, all were female and White British with no vulnerabilities. 2 aged 20-29, 1 aged 30-39, and 1 aged 50-59. We had 13 tenants attend across both workshops; some tenants attended both workshops. 10 were female, and 3 were male, all participants identified as being White British, 5 of which have told us they had a vulnerability or disability. 2 was aged between 20-29, 2 aged between 30-39, 2 aged between 40-49, 4 aged between 50-59 and 3 aged between 60-69.

Online Focus Group

Through discussions throughout the session the online focus group put forward 13 recommendations on how we could improve the ASB service. The suggestions were primarily ways to improve the tenants experience throughout the case and to improve the staff culture when handling ASB cases.

In Person Focus Group

Throughout the session, participants were asked to give their suggestions on how we could improve the ASB service. All suggestions from the day were taken down and used to create the full list of recommendations. In the final part of the session, each table was asked to write down their "ASB Wishlist," this included all and any improvements they felt would have the most impact in improving the ASB service. They were then asked to rank the top 3 on their lists.

Throughout the session the in person focus group put forward 34 recommendations on how we could improve the ASB service.

Rank	Score Given
1	10
2	7.5
3	5

The top priorities to come out of the session were:

Recommendation	Score
One point of contact throughout the ASB case	20
In person engagement sessions around ASB and other landlord responsibilities- Surgeries for communities where we know tenants face digital	15

exclusion. This to also include Local MP, councillors, staff.	
Manage expectations with a detailed action plan for tenants which include time scales	12.5
Designing a Neighbourhood Toolkit, which demonstrates how to be a good neighbour and what to do if you are experiencing ASB.	12.5
The new Tenant Handbook to be updated about ASB changes, process, resources.	10
Look at early intervention techniques to reduce a formal and lengthy ASB case. (E.g. buying the equipment early on, speaking to residents, encourage conversation between neighbours, reminding people of their tenancy agreement).	7.5
A “No Judgement response” from staff who are handling ASB cases	7.5
Designated time for officers to ask for help and gain support on ASB cases.	5

Recommendations

After removing the duplicates, we combined the recommendations with similar themes/ and messages which resulted in 32 original recommendations remaining.

This is positive as it shows that both groups recommended similar improvements. It was identified which staff member would be responsible for each recommendation, and they were asked to rank whether the recommendation would be high or low effort and high or low impact.

After this discussion one recommendation was rejected, this was “The consistent use of communication via WhatsApp.” This is because this does not fit in with Council policy around IT and Data use.

The Tenant Board then reviewed the recommendations and the ranking and told us they believed the recommendations accurately represented the views that were found in the focus group. The Tenant Board will continue to monitor the progress of the recommendations every 3 months and when significant progress has been made.

Final List of Recommendations with categories and ranking

ASB Scrutiny Recommendation List with categories and rank

#	Recommendation	Category	Rank	Outcome	Comments
1	"One experience" no matter who it's reported to or who is reporting.	ASB Process	High Effort, High Impact	Approved	Ensuring that all ASB procedures are the same across the council. New ASB Policy should reflect this.
2	Agreeing communication avenues early on.	ASB Process Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	This will help manage expectations early on.
3	Manage expectations with a detailed action plan for tenants which include time scales.	ASB Process	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	This will help manage expectations early on. Will ensure the tenant knows what to expect through the ASB process.
4	Managing expectations where the action has changed throughout the case.	ASB Process	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	
5	Round table case discussions for staff and third-party support when appropriate.	Roles, Responsibilities and powers available ASB Process	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	To do this more around bigger ASB cases when multi agency support is needed.
6	Regular contact with tenants throughout their case, even if it's just to update.	ASB Process	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	This will link in with the action plan for each case and agreed early on. We must ensure our officers update when necessary, and not over communicate
7	Single point of contact for the tenant to communicate about the case.	ASB Process	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	Where this involved other team, we need to ensure that we have a designated person who takes responsibility to communicate with the tenant

8	Training for staff to handle ASB effectively.	Process (Training and Support) Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	
9	Training on empathy and soft skills/ professionalism (“Value of feeling valued and listened to”).	Process (Training and Support) Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	
10	Time for officers to ask for help/ support on ASB cases and learn from cases.	Process (Training and Support)	High Effort, High Impact	Approved	
11	Face to face reporting to any housing staff member- Training on Housing Law.	Process (Training and Support)	High Effort, Low Impact	Approved	Housing Law training for all housing staff. ASB can be reported to any housing team member.
12	Have a 'case by case' more flexible approach.	Process (Training and Support)	High Effort, High Impact	Approved	Every case is different, add to the housing officer training
13	ASB improvement day for staff.	Process (Training and Support) Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	High Effort, High Impact	Approved	
14	Updating cases on online systems so work can be picked up without tenant repeating themselves.	Process (Training and Support)	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	Ensuring the same level of detail is provided on cases
15	Clear process on what happens when an officer leaves/ changes patch	Process (New Tenancy Services)	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	Will make part of the new “buddy system” in which every Housing Officer will have a buddy.

		Structure/ New ASB Process)			
16	Enough staff to cope with the amount of ASB cases.	Resources (New Tenancy Services Structure)	High Effort (initially), Low impact	Approved	The new Tenancy Services restructure will create more Housing Officer posts
17	Digital alternative to log sheets (Noise App)	Resources	High Effort, Low impact	Approved	To work with Environmental Health and understand what they use.
18	More support/ third party help for victims of ASB (1-2-1 support)	Resources Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	High Effort (initially), High Impact	Approved	
19	Buying items that will help reduce ASB early on such as ring doorbells, fencing etc.	Resources Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	
20	ASB checklist for staff and tenants to understand what steps should be taken when the council is investigating ASB.	Resources	Low Effort, Low Impact (With Neighbourhood Toolkit)	Approved	
21	Look at early intervention techniques to reduce a formal and lengthy ASB case. (E.g. speaking to residents, encourage conversation between neighbours, reminding people of their tenancy agreement).	Resources (Risks)	Low Effort (High initially), High Impact	Approved	
22	Working closely with Domestic Violence support. Understand how we	Resources (Risks)	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	Working with our internal Domestic Abuse Link Worker and understanding what external support is available.

	can support our tenants with internal and external support.	Roles, Responsibilities and powers available			
23	Using data from transactional surveys to continually improve the service.	Continuous Improvement	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	Send monthly updates to Housing Officer Team leader.
24	Peer Review and independent case reviews so staff can learn from what we aren't doing.	Continuous Improvement	High Effort, High Impact	Approved	
25	Have system of 'flags' - for repeated behaviour and length of time etc. Investigating how we can link of cases on our housing system (multiple reports for same perpetrator).	Procedure (Systems)	High Effort-High Impact	Approved	Systems to give an update on how we can move forward with this in April
26	Standardised use of WhatsApp to communicate to tenants around ASB (REJECTED).	Procedure (Systems)	High Effort, High Impact	Rejected	Although there may be operational reasons why staff may want to use WhatsApp, serious issues have been raised nationally as to the use of WhatsApp, including by the Information Commissioner's Office, the national watchdog for data protection in England
27	Add question to ASB reporting form to ask if this has been reported before.	Procedure (Systems)	Low Effort-High Impact	Approved	This will help both the tenant reporting and the officer.
28	Create a Neighbourhood Toolkit	Communication/Publications	High Effort-High Impact	Approved	
29	Tenant Handbook to be updated about ASB changes, process, resources.	Communications/Publications	Low Effort-High Impact	Approved	The first update to the handbook will be in May 2025
30	More explanation on the process and the tools we on the website and handbook.	Communications/Publications	Low Effort, High Impact	Approved	Making sure we are communicating with tenants our process and resources when dealing with ASB. Ensuring this information is also in the Handbook and on our website.
31	In person engagement sessions around ASB and other landlord	Communications/Publications	High Effort-High Impact	Approved	To find out the areas where we have more digital exclusion and target these areas

	responsibilities. Surgeries for communities where we know tenants face digital exclusion. This to also include Local MP, councillors, staff.				
32	Improve information online regarding reporting via phone.	Communications/ Publications	Low Effort- Low impact	Approved	Update the Tenant handbook and the website

Recommendations Action Plan with timescales

#	Recommendation	Category	Responsibility	Timescale for delivery
1	"One experience" no matter who it's reported to or who is reporting.	ASB Process	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
2	Agreeing communication avenues early on.	ASB Process Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
3	Manage expectations with a detailed action plan for tenants which include time scales.	ASB Process	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
4	Managing expectations where the action has changed throughout the case.	ASB Process	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
5	Round table case discussions for staff and third-party support when appropriate.	Roles, Responsibilities and powers available ASB Process	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
6	Regular contact with tenants throughout their case, even if it's just to update.	ASB Process	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
7	Single point of contact for the tenant to communicate about the case.	ASB Process	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
8	Training for staff to handle ASB effectively.	Process (Training and Support) Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Housing Team Leader/ Head of Tenancy Services/ Head of Housing Transformation	Q4 25-26
9	Training on empathy and soft skills/ professionalism ("Value of feeling valued and listened to").	Process (Training and Support)	Housing Team Leader/ Head of Tenancy Services/ Head of Housing Transformation	Q4 25-26

		Roles, Responsibilities and powers available		
10	Time for officers to ask for help/ support on ASB cases and learn from cases.	Process (Training and Support)	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
11	Face to face reporting to any housing staff member- Training on Housing Law.	Process (Training and Support)	Housing Team Leader/ Head of Tenancy Services/ Head of Housing Transformation	Q4 25-26
12	Have a 'case by case' more flexible approach.	Process (Training and Support)	Housing Team Leader	Q3 25-26
13	ASB improvement day for staff.	Process (Training and Support) Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Housing Team Leader/ Head of Tenancy Services/ Head of Housing Transformation	Q3 25-26
14	Updating cases on online systems so work can be picked up without tenant repeating themselves.	Process (Training and Support)	Housing Team Leader/ Housing Programme & Housing Systems Support Manager	Q2 25-26
15	Clear process on what happens when an officer leaves/ changes patch.	Process (New Tenancy Services Structure/ New ASB Process)	Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
16	Enough staff to cope with the amount of ASB cases.	Resources (New Tenancy Services Structure)	Head of Tenancy Services/ Director of Housing	Q2 25-26
17	Digital alternative to log sheets (Noise App)	Process	Head of Tenancy Services/ Housing Team Leader	TBC
18	More support/ third party help for victims of ASB (1-2-1 support)	Resources Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Head of Tenancy Services/ Housing Team Leader	Q3 25-26
19	Buying items that will help reduce ASB early on such as ring doorbells, fencing etc.	Resources Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Head of Tenancy Services/ Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26

20	ASB checklist for staff and tenants to understand what steps should be taken when the council is investigating ASB.	Process	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinators/ Housing Team Leader	Q3 25-26
21	Look at early intervention techniques to reduce a formal and lengthy ASB case. (E.g. speaking to residents, encourage conversation between neighbours, reminding people of their tenancy agreement).	Resources (Risks)	Head of Tenancy Services/ Housing Team Leader	Q2 25-26
22	Working closely with Domestic Violence support. Understand how we can support our tenants with internal and external support.	Resources (Risks) Roles, Responsibilities and powers available	Head of Tenancy Services/ Housing Team Leader/ Domestic Abuse Link Worker	Q2 25-26
23	Using data from transactional surveys to continually improve the service.	Continuous Improvement	Tenant Insight and Improvement Manager/ Housing Team Leader	Q1 25-26
24	Peer Review and independent case reviews so staff can learn from what we aren't doing.	Continuous Improvement	Housing Team Leader	Q3 25-26
25	Have system of 'flags' - for repeated behaviour and length of time etc. Investigating how we can link of cases on our housing system (multiple reports for same perpetrator).	Procedure (Systems)	Housing Programme & Housing Systems Support Manager	Q3 25-26
26	Standardised use of WhatsApp to communicate to tenants around ASB (REJECTED).	Procedure (Systems)	Head of ICT and Programmes	N/A
27	Add question to ASB reporting form to ask if this has been reported before.	Procedure (Systems)	Web Co-ordinator	Q1 25-26
28	Create a Neighbourhood Toolkit	Communication/ Publications	Communities Team/ Housing Team/ Environmental Health Team/ Housing Transformation Team	Q4 25-26
29	Tenant Handbook to be updated about ASB changes, process, resources.	Communications/ Publications	Tenant Insight and Improvement Manager/ Housing Team Leader	Q1 25-26 initially but will continuously be updated.
30	More explanation on the process and the tools we on the website and handbook.	ASB Process	Housing Team Leader (with Web Coordinator and Tenant Insight and Improvement Manager)	Q2 25-26

31	In person engagement sessions around ASB and other landlord responsibilities- Surgeries for communities where we know tenants face digital exclusion. This to also include Local MP, councillors, staff.	Communications/ Publications	Tenant Engagement Co-ordinators/ Housing Team Leader	Q4 25-26
32	Improve information online regarding reporting via phone.	Communications/ Publications	Housing Team Leader/ Web Coordinator	Q1 25-26