



Your Homes
Newcastle

**Statement and Summary of
Policies and Procedures for
Anti-Social Behaviour
November 2007**

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1. An Introduction

Dealing with anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment has always been an important part of managing housing in Newcastle. The need for effective partnership working and enforcement action to address anti social behaviour has become essential in order to provide housing that people want to live in.

Your Homes Newcastle is taking clear steps to deal effectively with anti-social behaviour, nuisance and harassment, in line with recent changes in legislation, so that residents can enjoy a comfortable and safe environment to live in.

Your Homes Newcastle believes that residents are entitled to live in well managed homes where they feel good about themselves and their communities. In order to achieve this, the organisation will strive to work in partnership with others to reduce the level of crime, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment, and will operate effective procedures to support victims and to take action against those who cause problems for their neighbours.

2. What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

Anti-Social Behaviour

'Anti-social behaviour involves acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household' (Crime & Disorder Act 1998)

'Conduct causing or likely to cause a nuisance or annoyance to a person residing in, visiting or otherwise engaging in lawful activity in a locality' (Housing Act 1996)

'Anti-social behaviour is behaviour that unreasonably interferes with other peoples rights to the use & enjoyments of their home & community' (CIH Good Practice Briefing)

The behaviour of neighbours is regulated not just by law, but also by the generally accepted belief that everyone has a right to enjoy life in their own way, providing they don't adversely affect the lives of people living near them. Simply reminding someone that their behaviour is upsetting the peace or lifestyle of others is often enough to resolve the problem.

Anti-social behaviour constitutes a wide variety of activities that may cause nuisance and distress to others. Anti-social behaviour includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Domestic violence;
- Physical violence;
- Harassment, Racist Harassment or Hate Crime;

- Verbal abuse or other abusive behaviour including threats to YHN staff;
- Drug and alcohol abuse causing anti-social behaviour;
- Involvement with illegal drugs;
- Playing music loudly or making other noise;
- Not keeping pets under control, including fouling;
- Fly tipping, dumping rubbish and setting fires;
- Damaging or neglect of property and garden;
- Undertaking car repairs;
- Illegal or immoral use of a property;
- Graffiti;
- Indulging in activities which we would consider to cause nuisance and annoyance to others;

3. YHN's policies & procedures

YHN's policies and procedures have been shaped by the recommendations of the Audit Commission good practice, the Government's 'Respect' Agenda and an external review of the way we manage anti social behaviour in November 2006.

A YHN 'Respect' work stream has taken forward various improvements about how we manage anti-social behaviour to achieve the respect standard for housing management.

Our policies and procedures have been brought up to date utilising available best practice and recent legislation to develop a clear policy statement on how we would manage anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment, including service standards for the service.

These procedures centre around providing staff involved with clear guidance and suggested options for managing anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods. They are designed to ensure consistent, agreed action in line with service standards with an emphasis on support and feedback to victims as well as covering the range of activities which can be taken against perpetrators.

4. Why is anti social behaviour a priority for YHN?

The Government has increasingly made anti-social behaviour a top priority and the 'Respect Agenda' has afforded new responsibilities on social landlords in addition to existing provisions in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Crime and Disorder Act 1998 & Housing Act 1996.

YHN, as management agent for the Council, has developed strategies, policies and procedures over a number of years to support its tenants and other residents and takes a lead role in the over-arching partnership 'Safe Newcastle'. Newcastle City Council's Community Safety Unit is central to developing the partnership's 'Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy' with YHN which

aims to reduce nuisance, anti-social behaviour and disorder, and is committed to ensuring that everyone is entitled to live without harassment or fear.

YHN aims to surpass the expectations of the Government's Respect Standard for Housing Management and is recognised by Newcastle City Council's Strategic Housing Service as the lead agency in delivering the 'Respect' standard in the City.

We aim to demonstrate this through:

- Being accountable, leading, committed by taking a stand against anti social behaviour and effectively resourcing our specialist Housing, Anti Social Behaviour & Enforcement Team
- Empowering residents through our support for an extensive network of our Tenant's and Resident's Groups across the City and our commitment to local multi agency problem solving groups
- Rewarding good neighbours at our annual 'Tenants and leaseholders' event.
- Having clear reporting mechanisms through our network of housing offices, our web site and the 24 hour reporting line '101'
- Support for witnesses through our dedicated Victim Support Worker
- Early intervention through Newcastle's graded response
- Taking swift action to enforce breaches through our specialist Housing, Anti Social Behaviour & Enforcement Team
- Pro-actively using publicity to boost public confidence that we will not hesitate to take firm action against anti social behaviour and to make sure that communities are clear about enforcement penalties
- Tackling the causes of anti social behaviour through effective intelligence sharing with our safe Newcastle partners
- Signing the Respect Standard for Housing Management in July 2007

5. Your Homes Newcastle's 'Delivery Plan'

Your Homes Newcastle's 'Delivery Plan' and mission statement to become the best housing provider in the North East have been developed in conjunction with tenants and staff to support the delivery of the aims of the Safe Newcastle Partnership and the City Council. Examples of how we do this include:

- Contributing to Newcastle's response to anti social behaviour through our specialist Housing, Anti Social Behaviour & Enforcement team (HASBET).
- Tackling anti social behaviour consistently across all tenures to meet the Government's 'Respect' standard for housing management, and therefore increasing demand for our properties, reducing void levels and ensuring the sustainability of estates,
- Carrying out home improvements using secure by design standards,

- Tackling anti – social behaviour on estates promptly and effectively through our graded response,
- Managing the Family Intervention Project on behalf of Safe Newcastle
- Increasing investment in security works and services such as controlled door entry systems and the concierge services
- Managing Newcastle's graded response early intervention process by co-ordinating a series of warning letters linked to Police & City Council intelligence to ensure that we target the most persistent offenders to prevent anti social behaviour from escalating

6. Your Homes Newcastle – our commitment to reducing anti social behaviour

Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) has a number of aims and objectives in relation to nuisance and harassment.

These are to:

- Tackle anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment on estates promptly and effectively, through partnership working,
- Continually improve our Housing, Anti-social Behaviour and Enforcement Team, which supports local staff in tackling and reducing nuisance and harassment,
- Provide guidance to all housing management staff through appropriate training, policies and procedures that will be used consistently to meet the challenges presented by nuisance and harassment,
- Provide appropriate support to individual victims, witnesses and communities who face problems in their homes and on their estates. A dedicated Victim Support worker is employed within the Housing, Anti-social Behaviour and Enforcement Team.
- Consult with tenants and other residents and work with them to reach appropriate and mutually beneficial solutions to problems, and
- Implement service standards in relation to nuisance and harassment, so that service users are clear about the service they can expect from us.

7. Who do I contact at YHN about anti social behaviour?

Your Homes Newcastle provides a central role in managing and reducing anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment through the work of numerous staff and teams. We invest in our properties to improve security and also to make residents feel secure.

The Community Housing Office

YHN's neighbourhood based housing office staff act on all reports of anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment that they receive acting as a first point of contact with residents. Most incidents are dealt with successfully at a neighbourhood level, through initial contact with local staff who discuss complaints with both victims and perpetrators. Click on the link for the location and contact details of your nearest community housing office.

http://www.yhn.org.uk/core.nsf/a/map_allchos

Housing, Anti-social Behaviour and Enforcement Team (HASBET) and Victim Support

YHN's Housing, Anti-social Behaviour and Enforcement Team provides dedicated support to estate based staff in dealing with nuisance and harassment, particularly where cases cannot be resolved at a local level. To support witnesses and victims an officer from Victim Support has been seconded into the HASBET team.

The Housing Anti Social and Enforcement Team uses a range of interventions to tackle anti social behaviour across the city. These have included prevention, education, diversion and enforcement as appropriate, including;

- support for the Children's Safety Education Foundation
- graded response early intervention warning letters and visits
- acceptable behaviour agreements
- injunctions
- anti social behaviour orders
- extending introductory tenancies
- tenancy demotion orders
- possession proceedings
- evictions

The HASBET team has 2 enforcement officers working in the private sector funded through Neighbourhood Renewal (NRF) supporting victims and private landlords.

HASBET can be contacted:

In writing

Housing Anti Social Behaviour and Enforcement Team
YHN House, Benton Park Road
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7LX

By telephone

Telephone 101 24 hour reporting line;
or telephone the Housing Anti Social Behaviour and Enforcement Team on
0191 278 8740 (during office hours).

By fax

0191 278 8758

By e-mail

newcastleasbunit@yhn.org.uk

8. Housing, Antisocial Behaviour and Enforcement Team – service standards

Why have service standards?

We have produced these service standards so that every tenant and person who uses our services understands the level of service they can expect to receive from us. We will review all service standards every two years and we will involve service users in this process. We will monitor all service standards and give a report of the results to area boards every two months. We will also publish the report in 'Homes and People', our newsletter.

We value our reputation as one of the best housing providers in the North East. We aim to provide the best possible service with the resources we have. When we cannot meet your needs ourselves, we try to refer you to other people and organisations who can help.

This means that the service you receive will be:

- polite;
- fair and unbiased;
- confidential;
- efficient; and
- appropriate to any special needs you may have.

When offering our services we will treat everyone equally, no matter what their race, disability, sex, age, sexuality or religious beliefs.

8.1 What can I expect from the service?

- When you contact the Housing, Antisocial Behaviour and Enforcement Team to report antisocial behaviour, we start an investigation within a set time (see 'Response times' below). We have a service standard for achieving these response times.
- After we have investigated your complaint, we will:
 - tell you about any action we have taken to deal with the problem; or
 - tell you why we are not able to take action.
- If we need you to fill in diary sheets to record incidents, we will explain how you must do this. At first we will ask you to keep the diary sheets for no more than five working days. After this time we will review them with you. If they are useful, we may ask you to continue.
- We will not reveal your identity unless you agree that we can.
- We will contact you regularly to keep you up to date with the steps we are taking to deal with your complaint. We will do this by letter, e-mail or phone, or by visiting you. We will agree with you how regular the contact will be.
- We will write to you and tell you the name of the housing enforcement officer who will deal with your case.
- We will take the lead, and work with other agencies, to deal with problems. Examples of other agencies are the social services, public health, street wardens and the police.
- We will tell you what support we and other agencies can give you. Examples of other agencies are Victim Support and mediation.
- We understand that you may not feel able to give evidence in court. If this happens, we will try to use the evidence that other people, such as housing officers and street wardens, have gathered. We will discuss what this means with you.
- If you are willing to be a witness and give evidence at court, we will give you support before, during and after any legal proceedings.
- We will ask you to fill in a satisfaction feedback form after your complaint has been investigated. This will help us to continue to improve and develop our procedures.

8.2 Response times

We put all incidents of antisocial behaviour reported to us in categories according to their seriousness, and investigate the most serious as a priority. If an incident is made up of several different types of antisocial behaviour, our staff will treat the most serious part of the complaint first.

Category 1– response the next working day

This is for the most serious types of antisocial behaviour.

- Verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation, threatening behaviour
- Hate-related incidents (based on a person's sex, race, sexuality, disability, religion or age)
- Drugs, substance misuse, drug dealing
- Domestic violence, abuse
- Other physical violence
- Abuse and threats to staff

Category 2 – response within five working days

- Noise
- Vandalism and damage to property
- Alcohol-related incidents
- Prostitution, sexual acts, kerb-crawling
- Other criminal behaviour

Category 3 – response within 10 working days

- Pets and animal nuisance
- Nuisance from vehicles
- Litter, rubbish, fly-tipping
- Garden nuisance
- Misuse of shared areas and public space, loitering

8.3 Our service standards

- When you report antisocial behaviour to us we will confirm that we have received your complaint in writing within five working days.
- We will send you details of our Victim Support Officer in writing within five working days.
- We will contact you within the following times to offer a face-to-face interview or an interview by phone, or by e-mail if you would prefer. The timescales are based on how serious the antisocial behaviour is.

- We will contact you the next working day if the antisocial behaviour is very serious.
- We will contact you within five working days if the antisocial behaviour is serious but does not need an immediate response.
- We will contact you within 10 working days for less serious types of antisocial behaviour.

(There are examples of different categories of antisocial behaviour on the previous page.)

- We will contact the person you say has carried out the antisocial behaviour within five working days of the timescales above. This will help us investigate your complaint. We will only do this with your permission. In certain circumstances it may not be appropriate to contact them and we will explain the reasons for this to you.
- We will send you a customer satisfaction form within five working days of closing your complaint.

Putting things right

We will always try to provide the best services that we can. If, however, you are not satisfied with our service, please let us know and we will try to sort out your complaint immediately. If you are still not satisfied, please ask for our compliments, complaints and comments leaflet which gives you details about how to complain. A senior manager will investigate your complaint and write to you within 10 working days.

Contact details

Write to: Housing, Antisocial Behaviour and Enforcement Team
 YHN House
 Benton Park Road
 Newcastle Upon Tyne
 NE7 7LX.

Phone: 101 (24-hour incident reporting)

Phone: 0191 278 8740 (office)

Fax: 0191 278 8758

Minicom: 0191 278 7727

E-mail: newcastleasbunit@yhn.org.uk

Website www.yhn.org.uk

9. Obligations of tenants

All tenants of Your Homes Newcastle will have signed a tenancy agreement which sets out the rights and responsibilities of Newcastle City Council and its tenants. The following extracts are clauses from the tenancy agreement outlining tenant's responsibilities in respect of anti-social behaviour

The following clauses are conditions of the Council Tenancy Agreement

9.1 Nuisance and annoyance

You must make sure that you, and people living in or visiting your home, do not harass, annoy or cause a nuisance, or do anything likely to annoy or cause a nuisance, to:

- any person living or working in the local area;
- any person who lives in a council house; or
- any of our employees or any person acting for us.

You must make sure that you and any people living in or visiting your home keep any pets or other animals under control so that they do not annoy your neighbours or cause a nuisance.

9.2 Criminal behaviour

You must make sure that you and the people living in or visiting your home are not convicted of either:

- using the premises, or allowing them to be used, for illegal purposes; or
- an arrestable offence (serious offence) committed in the local area around the property.

9.3 Domestic violence

You must make sure that you do not make your partner leave the property permanently because you are violent or threaten violence to her or him or to members of her or his family who live in the property (see YHN booklet 8 'Living in your neighbourhood' for more information).

9.4 Damage to property

You must make sure that you and any person living in or visiting your home do not damage or remove any property we own, or try to do so.

9.5 Racist harassment

You must make sure that you, or people living in or visiting your home, do not harass, annoy, threaten or cause a nuisance to anybody because of their race, colour or ethnic background (see YHN booklet 8 'Living in your neighbourhood' for more information).

9.6 Encouraging others

You must make sure that you and people living in or visiting your home do not encourage any other person to do anything mentioned in the paragraphs above.

10. Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Statement about Harassment

You and/or any other person residing at and/or visiting the property must not behave or threaten to behave in a way that causes, or is capable of causing nuisance, alarm, harassment, distress or annoyance to your neighbours, and/or anyone working lawfully in or visiting the area, for example, housing staff, contractors, social workers, guests of neighbours or others. You and/or any other person residing at and/or visiting the property must not use your home for immoral or unlawful purposes.

You are responsible for your own behaviour and for that of anyone including children living or visiting your home, whether permanently or temporarily. For the avoidance of doubt, clauses below apply to adult children, lodgers, licensees, sub-tenants, other adult members of your household, children under 18 and visitors to the property.

You must make sure that you, other people living with you, and any visitors to your home do not:

- a. behave in a way which causes, or is capable of causing a nuisance or annoyance or disturbance to people living, visiting or working in the locality of your home**
- b. act in a way which is likely to cause, or be capable of causing a nuisance or annoyance or disturbance to people, living, visiting or working in the locality of your home**
- c. harass, abuse or threaten people living, visiting or working in the locality of your home**
- d. damage, misuse or dump rubbish in communal areas, corridors, stairwells, shared entrances, play areas or anywhere else including any other property owned by the Newcastle City Council.**

Harassment, and distress includes but is not limited to:

**Violence or threats of violence towards any person including Your Homes Newcastle employees, agents and contractors of the Council.
Abusive or insulting words or behaviour.**

**Damage or threats of damage to another persons property or home.
Writing threatening, abusive or insulting graffiti.**

Any interference with the peace or comfort of any other person.

Racial harassment.

Sexual harassment.

Harassment because of a persons sex, gender, race nationality, ethnic grouping, religion, sexuality, physical disability, learning disability, or because they have HIV/AIDS.

Nuisance, annoyance, or disturbance includes but is not limited to:

loud music

arguing

door slamming

dog barking and fouling

being drunk

being under the influence of drugs

shouting

untidy gardens and/or properties.

You and/or anyone living at and/or visiting your home...

Must not use your home for any illegal or immoral purposes such as selling drugs, possessing drugs, storing drugs or stolen goods or prostitution.

Must not undertake any illegal or immoral act such as selling drugs, possessing drugs, storing drugs or stolen drugs or prostitution in the locality of your home.

Must not commit an arrestable offence in, or within the locality of your home.

Must not inflict violence or threaten violence against any other person either living with you or in another Council home. You must not harass or use physical, mental, emotional or sexual abuse against anyone residing in, visiting or otherwise engaged in a lawful activity within the locality.

11 Other YHN services that support residents

11.1 YHN's Inline supported tenancies for young people and the Family Intervention Project (FIP)

Inline aim to help young people make a success of their first tenancy with YHN. Inline offer help to;

identify the ongoing support and help needed

understand the responsibilities of managing a tenancy and budgets

get recognition for the skills young people develop through living independently

get involved with the big decisions that affect the lives of people throughout Newcastle

There are 4 main parts of Inline work;

- providing practical and emotional support to young people in housing crisis which can lead them to living in their own tenancy for the first time.
- support young people to use the rights they have to make positive productive changes in Newcastle.
- recruit and train community volunteers to support the young people with the North East Open College Network (NEOCN). Inline's personal development programme is an accreditation programme that provides young people the opportunity to gain recognised certificates through the Open College Network.
- Newcastle Family Intervention Project (FIP)

Family Intervention Project's have been promoted by the Home Office as part of the Government's Respect agenda in combating anti social behaviour. The projects are intended to focus resources on those families causing the most anti social behaviour in their communities. The resources are used to employ specialist staff who work with a very small number of families who are causing extensive anti social behaviour. They are there to deliver services to the families and to co-ordinate and ensure other agencies deliver services appropriately. The overall aim is to reduce or resolve the anti social behaviour the families are causing. If families do not engage with the project then enforcement action and powers (eviction, parenting orders, ASBO's, etc) will be the consequence. FIP staff will work with families to address the causes for their behaviour, alongside supervision and enforcement tools, to provide them with the incentives to change.

YHN's Inline team have been appointed to provide this service in Newcastle after winning the tender through the Council's corporate procurement process.

Three Project Workers work with a caseload of families intensively for 6 to 12 months on average.

11.2 YHN's Concierge Service

The Concierge Service provides 5,800 Council tenants and leaseholders living in flats across Newcastle with a comprehensive Concierge service including:

- building cleaning
- reception duties
- safety and security including an initial investigation of low level nuisance complaints raised by residents
- inspections to shared areas
- the monitoring of a citywide CCTV system that helps make our communities safer, stable places to live
- reporting incidents of anti social behaviour to the local housing office and HASBET team

11.3 YHN's Sheltered Housing Service

YHN's Sheltered Housing Service provides 2 complementary services;

- Mobile Warden Service

YHN's Mobile Warden Service provides emergency help if customers are elderly, disabled or have other special needs. Anyone living in Newcastle can join the service regardless of the type of accommodation or who owns the property.

- Sheltered Housing Service

YHN's Sheltered Housing service helps customers stay independent but with the benefit of a warden on call for help if needed. It is housing that is purpose built or adapted specifically for the needs of older people. There are a limited number of flats that are suitable for older people with physical disabilities.

The Senior Sheltered Housing Offices have a responsibility to investigate low level nuisance and anti social behaviour and refer appropriate cases to the HASBET team

11.4 YHN's Leaseholder Team

The Leasehold Team provides a Housing Management Service to all flats and maisonettes which have been initially purchased via the Right to Buy Process. There are currently close to 1,400 Leasehold properties across the city. These properties can be found within pairs of Tyneside flats, low rise, mid rise or multi-storey blocks.

Your Homes Newcastle remains responsible for the upkeep of the external structure of Leasehold properties and any common areas within the building. As Leaseholders have a financial interest in their property they are re-charged

for any services (e.g. concierge, lift maintenance, communal lighting etc) and any external repairs they receive.

The Leasehold Team are responsible for issuing the Annual Service Charge invoices and dealing with enquires relating to:

- Services and associated costs
- Buildings Insurance
- Repairs
- Neighbourhood complaints
- Anti-social behaviour
- Modern Homes Programme (External packages)

When the Leaseholder Team receive complaints about anti social behaviour of a leaseholder, this is a breach of their lease agreement. The Leaseholder Team use HASBET graded response warning letters to support an initial investigations before referring the case to HASBET where legal action is required to resolve the complaint.

11.5 Right to Buy Team

The Right to Buy section is a front line service ensuring the delivery of a free, comprehensive service to tenants wishing to purchase their council home. The aim of the section is to provide a first class service that is supportive to applicants and delivers within legislated timescales. The section receives and evaluates applications from secure tenants who have expressed an interest in purchasing their home. The legislation specifies actions and timescales detailing the service our customers are entitled to. Essentially we assess the applicant's entitlement to purchase their home and that the property is eligible for sale under the Right to Buy Scheme. Once those are established timely action is taken to ensure that the application progresses.

The Right to Buy section will email the HASBET and Rent Recovery Team every week with a list of applications to check if there are any rent arrears, anti social behaviour court action pending against the applicant.

Before an application completes the Right to Buy team will contact the HASBET and Rent Recovery Team to check if there are any rent arrears, anti social behaviour or court orders.

11.6 YHN's Advice & Support Service

The Advice and Support team can help you residents stay in your home and aim to prevent homelessness and help people sustain their tenancies.

The team offer residents support if they need;

- benefits advice
- debt counselling
- help moving into your new home
- help with rent arrears problems
- help you stay in a tenancy
- help to access accommodation and run their home well
- help as refugees that have been given right to remain in the UK

11.7 YHN's Asylum Seekers Unit (ASU)

Asylum Seekers Unit provides advice, support and accommodation for;

- people who have applied to the Home Office for asylum;
- people who have chosen to remain in Newcastle after receiving the right to remain in the UK.

The unit aims to provide a supportive environment to all people in Newcastle who have applied to the Home Office for asylum.

The three main parts of the work of the ASU

Ongoing support – the ASU liaise with households whilst they await all their asylum application decisions

Managing properties – the ASU is responsible for around 360 properties during the lifetime of YHN's contract with the Home Office.

Raising awareness – the ASU aim to ensure that people seeking asylum are free from discrimination and prejudice whilst they stay in Newcastle upon Tyne.

12 Partnership Working

We work both strategically and operationally with a range of partners to tackle nuisance and harassment.

These include:

12.1 The Safe Newcastle Partnership (previously called the Community Safety Partnership) has been working to tackle crime and anti social behaviour since 1998. It is made up of a wide range of agencies and partnerships working together to make Newcastle a safer place. Sharing the work and making use of resources in a joined up way means we are more effective in reducing crime. Safe Newcastle's vision is: "To create a safe Newcastle by tackling crime, alcohol, drugs, anti-social behaviour and their impact. By working together we will develop effective, sustainable solutions to local concerns, improve confidence and build stronger communities".

12.2 The City Council's Community Safety Unit works strategically in developing partnerships and supporting effective and innovative community safety initiatives that make Newcastle a safe place for people to live, work and socialise. An example of such an initiative is ARCH (Agencies Against Racist Crime and Harassment).

12.3 Public Health and Environmental Protection takes action in respect of statutory noise and environmental nuisance. YHN staff work in partnership with Environmental Health Officers where legal action is appropriate to deal with noise nuisance or health and safety issues. We actively use noise abatement legislation to support tenancy enforcement to stop anti social behaviour at the earliest opportunity.

12.4 Newcastle City Council's Neighbourhood Services employs Neighbourhood Street Wardens, Rapid Response Operatives and a Graffiti Team to work on estates. YHN staff work with wardens to increase public safety and security and to deter anti social behaviour. Street Warden's make reports to support the work of the Police and our Housing, Anti social behaviour and Enforcement Team. Ward based Rapid Response Teams tackle small scale environmental damage on estates that we have identified and the Graffiti Team give priority to racist or abusive graffiti.

12.5 Street Wardens.

The main aim of the Newcastle Street Warden Scheme is 'to create a clean, healthy, attractive, sustainable & safe environment in which people can live and work'.

The Wardens aim to achieve this through the following scheme objectives:

- To care for the physical appearance & management of the neighbourhood.

- To operate as ambassadors for effective neighbourhood management through partnership working.
- To increase public safety and security by patrolling designated areas with the view to deter anti social behaviour.
- To establish close links and be a point of contact for residents and traders in the area and handle any complaints, comments or feedback about any issues of concern on behalf of the Council .
- To reduce crime and the fear of crime and act as an enforcing team who are capable of delivering the requirements of related legislation, such as dog fouling, fly tipping etc.

Street Wardens patrol a number of neighbourhoods in the City of Newcastle and are very distinguishable wearing highly visible yellow tunics and red jacket. The Wardens operate a service 7 days a week from 2pm to 10pm.

Representatives from the Street Wardens service attend Safe Neighbourhoods Action and Problem Solving (SNAPS) meetings and many local Tenant & Residents Association (TARA) meetings.

12.6 ARCH (Agencies Against Racist Crime and Harassment)

ARCH are a group of organisations that work together to combat racism in Newcastle. These agencies include YHN, Northumbria Police and Victim Support.

ARCH provides:

- A free 24-hour phone line **08000 32 32 88** to report any racist incident anonymously and confidentially. It operates 365 days a year, with live translation in over 100 languages.
- 40 centres across Newcastle (including YHN's Community Housing Offices) where any racist incident can be reported
- Support to victims and action against perpetrators.
- Anti-discrimination and anti-racism training to professionals and young people.

12.7 Northumbria Police

Northumbria Police work with YHN to tackle incidents of anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment on our estates. We work with them at all levels both strategically through Safe Newcastle's Operational Delivery Group and operationally through localised SNAPs Groups. YHN's HASBET team progresses our Acceptable Behaviour Agreements with local police officers.

12.8 Social Services

Social Services and YHN are committed to sustaining tenancies through joint working following the protocol to prevent repeat homelessness & evictions to give residents the best chance of keeping their homes.

12.9 Other agencies such as the Youth Offending Team, Educational Welfare and the Probation Service work with us through the Safe Newcastle Partnership provide a joined up approach to tackling anti social behaviour and nuisance.

12.10 Liaison with local groups is an important tool in addressing general issues of crime, anti-social behaviour, nuisance and harassment. Discussions at a local level with tenant's & resident's groups and representatives are important to gain support for those who are experiencing problems and can often lead to initiatives around 'Neighbourhood Watch Schemes', good neighbour agreements or security schemes through mainstream investment programming or the use of area project fund.