



VALLEYS TO COAST
CYMOEDD I'R ARFORDIR

WHAT DOES V2C DO TO RESOLVE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

Most people will try to be good neighbours and don't set out to cause disputes. However, sometimes problems do arise.

This leaflet sets out advice and information on:-

- When you should seek help and advice from V2C and what we can and cannot do;
- Other organisations that can help you and what they can do.

V2Cs Stance on Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

V2C believes everyone has the right to their chosen lifestyle providing that this doesn't unreasonably spoil the quality of life of others – this implies tolerance, consideration and respect for the requirements and needs of others.

V2C takes all reports of ASB seriously and will take firm action to try and resolve any proven incidents. It is V2C's intention to deal firmly but fairly with ASB and to deter such behaviour, working with other agencies, wherever possible.

Some tenants tell us that they don't report ASB as they don't want to see their neighbours evicted. Making people homeless is always a last resort and far less likely to be necessary if you report someone's behaviour early, before it has chance to escalate. There are many way of dealing with ASB that do not result in someone losing their home.

Your Obligation

As residents of V2C's property, you and your neighbours have an obligation to act and behave in a reasonable way, so as not to interfere with each other's peaceful enjoyment of your homes. This obligation is set out as part of your tenancy agreement, which is a legal document.

What is ASB?

V2Cs tenancy agreement outlines the types of behaviour that are considered to be unacceptable. These are subcategorised into (each category contains some examples):

- Nuisance, annoyance or distress;
 - Noise
 - Offensive, abusive or threatening behaviour
 - Dumping of rubbish and fly-tipping

- Immoral Activities;
 - Selling drugs or drug abuse
 - Storing or selling stolen goods
 - Other criminal behaviour

- Harassment;
 - Racist behaviour
 - Violence and intimidation
 - Other hate related behaviour

- Domestic Violence

For a fuller list of examples please refer to the ASB Policy or your tenancy agreement.

The ability to cope with ASB varies from person to person. The responsibility for tackling ASB rests with **us all**; tenants, communities, the association, and organisations such as the Police and Local Authority. Only by working together can the problem be tackled effectively.

There are a number of remedies for dealing with ASB, ranging from enabling complainants to take constructive action themselves to V2C taking Legal Action against those tenants found to be acting in a serious anti-social manner.

Resolving neighbour disputes can take some time and we have to remain impartial throughout the process, not showing either side any favouritism. When we receive a report of ASB we have to investigate both sides of the story and gather the facts together in order to try and resolve the situation.

Self Help

Sometimes the best way to deal with less serious ASB is for you to approach the neighbour direct especially if it is the first time that you have experienced problems with that particular neighbour. Unless it is a severe problem, whenever you contact V2C to report an issue the first question that you will be asked is "Have you tried to speaking to the person causing the problem?"

For useful tips and advice on how you can resolve ASB yourself please see our leaflet "What Can I Do to Deal with Anti-Social Behaviour". This is available online or from our Customer Services Centre, telephone number 762472.

How to report ASB

You can report ASB:

- by **writing to us at:**

Customer Service Centre
Nolton Court
Court Road
Bridgend
CF31 1BX

- by **telephone**

to our ASB helpline on **01656 762500;**

- **Online**

by completing our ASB reporting form at
www.v2c.org.uk;

- or by **email**

at feedback@v2c.org.uk;

Your case will be recorded on our computer system and you will be given a reference number.

What will V2C do following receipt of a complaint?

When a complaint is received and recorded we will contact you within 4 working days, sooner if we consider it to be urgent e.g. racial harassment and hate related incidents.

Your Housing Officer (HO) will make an appointment to see you either in the office or at your home, whichever is most convenient to you. Together you can discuss the problems and the HO will advise you if a breach of tenancy has taken place and if a breach has not occurred then you will be advised that it is highly unlikely that V2C will be able to assist. If the HO believes that a breach has occurred then they will discuss with you any action which may be taken. This may include;

- You approaching your neighbour yourself;
- The HO approaching your neighbour or writing to them;
- Both of you collecting further evidence by;
 - Keeping diaries of events;
 - Speaking to independent witnesses;
 - Retaining evidence e.g. objects thrown;
 - Taking photographs;
 - Obtaining evidence from other neighbours;
 - Approaching Police or other agencies.

- Involving other appropriate agencies;
- Considering legal remedies.

All action taken will be agreed with you. Anything you wish to be confidential will remain so, although this might limit the action V2C can take. V2C will keep you informed of the progress of your complaint and offer all possible support to you.

A clear conclusion is important to all concerned i.e. the complainant, the alleged perpetrator and V2C and all action that we take will be taken with this ultimate goal in mind. Ideally the complainant should be satisfied with the result, but unfortunately this is not always possible e.g. if there is insufficient evidence to take legal action or if the complainants expectations are unrealistic. Therefore we will close some cases even though the complainant is not satisfied because we believe that we have exhausted all options available. However if this happens you will have recourse to the Complaints procedure.

Collecting Evidence

In the majority of cases we will try to resolve the matter without taking legal action, however if we do eventually have to take legal action, we will need strong evidence to present to the court.

Some things that you need to consider when collecting evidence is:

- Keep a record of all incidents, detailing times, dates and what happened. We can provide you with log sheets for this purpose or you can use our on-line reporting form (see our website (www.v2c.org.uk) for further details)
- You may want to take photographs, i.e. in relation to dumped rubbish, abandoned vehicles etc. However only do this if there is no risk to you. These photographs need to be dated and timed.
- If we take legal action you may need to confirm this evidence in court. However we will try all available options to resolve the situation without having to seek redress through the courts.

What Tools does V2C use to resolve ASB?

Responses will, as necessary and as appropriate, move from advice, mediation and support for tenants' own action to other non legal remedies such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) before considering legal action such injunctions, demotions and possession proceedings. However no two cases are the same and V2Cs response will depend on what action is necessary and appropriate for that particular case. All the remedies that are available to V2C are outlined in our policy document which is available upon request.

V2C takes a pro-active role in working with partners (such as the Police and the Local Authority) to deal with ASB. These agencies can help gather evidence or support victims and/or perpetrators in order to resolve ASB.