

Supporting witnesses of anti-social behaviour



Fact Sheet 4

Anti - social behaviour can be extremely stressful and affect a person's life incredibly. Cross Keys Homes recognises that witnesses need to be supported through this stressful time, particularly where the anti - social behaviour is such that legal action is required, and witnesses need to attend court and give evidence. Witnesses can be supported both emotionally and practically through this time depending on their individual experience.

Each person will experience anti - social behaviour differently, and need different types of support. For example, it may be that having the opportunity to discuss your feelings with someone once a week helps you, or that extra locks added to your exterior doors makes you feel safer whilst the problem is fully resolved. Below are the ways in which Cross Keys Homes can support you as a witness of anti social behaviour.

Keeping you updated.

You should expect to be updated regularly about how your case is progressing and have access to a named manager who you can contact to discuss your case with. In return, Cross Keys Homes also need to be regularly updated of incidents of anti - social behaviour so that necessary action can be taken. This is usually done by completing diary sheets (see fact sheet 2 for more information).

Cases involving the use of, or threatened use of violence.

Cross Keys Homes would always advise that in cases involving the use of, or threatened use of violence that you also contact the police as this may be a criminal offence that should be dealt with. However, it may be that Cross Keys Homes

can help either by adding additional security to your home, or by obtaining an injunction against the perpetrator. There is further information regarding injunctions in fact sheet 3, but it is important to remember that they can, and do offer a significant amount of protection to witnesses; and can be obtained quickly.

In very extreme circumstances, in order to prevent you from further harm it may be that Cross Keys Homes are able to support that you are moved either on a temporary or permanent basis to another home. This only applies to Cross Keys Homes' tenants.

Additional security measures.

In some cases, additional security measures can be added to your home and an assessment of those needs can be carried out.

- Additional security measures can be:-
- Fire proof letterboxes Window alarms
- Added locks to exterior doors

Talking about how you feel.

Talking to people about how you feel can really help many witnesses of anti - social behaviour to get through such a difficult time. It may be that many of your neighbours are experiencing the same problems and have an understanding about what you are going through, and that you can discuss your feelings with each other. It may be that you wish to talk to an officer at Cross Keys Homes about your feelings. Cross Keys Homes can also put you in contact with Peterborough Victim Support, who has trained volunteers to help people cope with crime.

Cases that require court action.

Most cases are resolved without the need for court action, but sometimes it is necessary to use a legal remedy in order to curb anti - social behaviour.

There is more information regarding legal remedies in fact sheet 3, but what is needed for all court action is evidence of the anti social behaviour in order for a court to consider the case.

You may therefore be asked to come to court and give evidence; and you can expect that you will be fully informed of the court process, given the opportunity to ask any questions about the process, and offered a visit to the court before the case is heard.

You can decline to attend court and give evidence, and Cross Keys Homes understands the reasons why you may not want to attend court. However, this could affect the overall case and how it can be dealt with.

When a case is resolved.

Cross Keys Homes recognises that the affects of anti - social behaviour do not always cease when the anti - social behaviour does, and that witnesses may need support for a time afterwards in order to be able to move on with their lives again. This is particularly the case when there has been a need for court action as this generally means that the anti - social behaviour has been ongoing for sometime and/ or has been very serious and even criminal.

At this point, additional security measures may still be an option, as is the opportunity to speak to someone about how you are feeling. You should express your concerns to the manager who has been dealing with and supporting you throughout the case.