

Community Safety Strategy 2025 - 2030

Consultation Response

Your Details				
Is this submission on behalf of an:	Organisation		Individual	
Name:	Click here to enter text.			
Organisation:	Click here to enter text.			
Postal Address:	Click here to enter text.			
Postcode:	Click here to enter text.			
Email:	Click here to enter text.			

Please note that if a response is recorded on behalf of an organisation the consultation response will include the name of an organisation while all individual responses will be anonymised as 'individual'

1	Do you agree with the vision of 'Building safer communities together'	YES	NO

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Further Comments:

2	Do you agree with Aim 1 and the relevant principles that will guide the delivery of the Strategy?	YES	NO

Aim 1	Build Community Confidence			
1:1	Residents and Communities will report issues to us, confident that we will respond to ASB in their areas.			
1:2	Residents and Communities are engaged and informed about community safety issues and the action we have taken in their area.			

Further Comments:

3	Do you agree with Aim 2 and the relevant Principles that will guide the delivery of the Strategy?	YES	NO
Aim 2	Ensuring local solutions to Local issues		


2.1	Interventions / Resolutions are designed to respond to the needs of communities		
Further Comments:			

4	Do you agree with Aim 3 and the relevant Principles that will guide the delivery of the Strategy?	YES	NO

Aim 3	Working Together		
3.1	Communities are assured we are working together with partners across Statutory, Voluntary and Community Sectors to achieve best outcomes for tenants and Communities.		
Further Comments:			

5	What do you believe should be prioritised in the strategic Action Plan?
Further Comments:	

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6	Do you agree with the definitions of Community safety?	YES	NO
			

Further Comments:

7	Is there anything you feel hasn't been included?	YES	NO



Further Comments:

A Case Review mechanism exists in England & Wales, in which victims of ASB can request a Case Review after three reported incidents over a six-month period. ASB Help, an organisation that provides guidance on how to access support as a victim of ASB, has reported¹ that this mechanism is not being universally or adequately implemented. The Commissioner Designate would like to see a similar or equivalent mechanism put in place here in Northern Ireland and properly implemented.

Links between ASB and Domestic Abuse

The Commissioner Designate has met with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance² (DAHA), who work with local authorities and housing associations in GB to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction and adoption of an established set of standards and an accreditation process and the provision of specialist training.

According to DAHA, tenants who are experiencing domestic abuse are four times more likely than other tenants to have ASB complaints made against them³. This can often be due to the misidentification of domestic abuse as ASB. For example, neighbours who hear frequent shouting, screaming, or banging might contact their local council, NIHE, landlord or police to report suspected ASB when some of the residents are victims of domestic abuse and may be at serious risk of harm including homicide.

When housing, police, or other multiagency professionals do not recognise these reports as domestic abuse and continue to treat them as ASB, they risk criminalising, isolating, evicting, and ultimately causing homelessness to victims and survivors, instead of offering safeguarding and support.

¹ <https://asbhelp.co.uk/our-new-report-shows-how-victims-are-being-let-down-by-asb-case-reviews/>

² [DAHA - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance \(dahalliance.org.uk\)](http://dahalliance.org.uk)

³ [Safe at Home Report.pdf \(safelives.org.uk\)](http://safelives.org.uk)

DAHA are working as part of a multi-agency project based in London called Restart⁴ that works to keep families safe within their own homes by providing an early intervention service with children's social care teams coupled with the provision of specialist domestic abuse services and includes, where appropriate, access to accommodation pathways for the perpetrator in order to keep families safe at home.

This means that domestic abuse victims are not forced to leave their local support structure and potentially break their tenancy agreement, if they do not want to.

They have also developed a toolkit⁵ for housing providers in GB that provides guidance on addressing the needs of victims of domestic abuse/violence and "spotting the signs", including the key signs of domestic abuse/violence that housing providers should be aware of including;

- Antisocial behaviour – Domestic abuse is commonly labelled by housing providers as antisocial behaviour but is often an indicator of domestic abuse/violence;
- Rent arrears – Residents experiencing domestic abuse/violence are 7 times more likely to be in rent arrears of more than £1000;
- Repairs – There tends to be high levels of property damage in homes where there is domestic abuse/violence.

Links between ASB and other vulnerabilities

Misidentified ASB does not only cover situations of domestic abuse. There are many circumstances where the nuisance and annoyance perceived by neighbours are linked to other vulnerabilities or circumstances that are beyond the tenants' control.

There will also be many victims/survivors of domestic abuse who also experience other vulnerabilities and might be wrongly suspected of causing ASB. ASB is often linked with mental ill health, and it can intersect with neurodivergence and how people interpret others' behaviour.

It is therefore vital to consider any response to ASB with caution and always consider the potential vulnerabilities and personal circumstances in which tenants find themselves. Any proposals to amend legislation to include injunctions, powers of arrest and power of exclusion, must be accompanied with the requisite training and awareness raising for frontline professionals on the links between ASB and domestic abuse and other vulnerabilities.

⁴ [Restart - Cranstoun](#)

⁵ [13 -wha-daha.pdf \(dahalliance.org.uk\)](#)