Community Safety Strategy 2025 - 2030

Consultation Response

		Your Details		
Is this submission on behalf of an:	Organisation		Individual	
Name:	Click here to ent	er text.		
Organisation:	Click here to ent	er text.		
Postal Address:	Click here to enter text.			
Postcode:	Click here to ent	er text.		
Email:	Click here to ent	er 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	YES	NO
	the vision of		
	'Building safer		
	communities		
	together'		

Furth	ner Comments:		

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

Aim 1	Build Community		
73111 1	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.		
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Further Comments:		

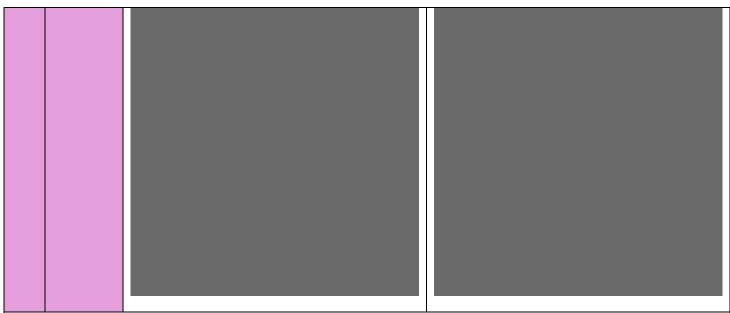
3	Do you agree with	YES	NO
	Aim 2 and the		
	relevant Principles that		
	will guide the		
	delivery of the		
	Strategy?		
Aim 2	Ensuring local		
	solutions to Local		
	issues		

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

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

Λ:,,,	Morlding	
Aim	Working	
3	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.	
	Communices.	
Furth	er Comments:	
I ditti	ici comments.	
5	What d	o you believe should be prioritised in the strategic Action Plan?
	J. Tillat G	- y
Furth	er Comments:	

	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)

³ Safe at Home Report.pdf (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)