



Scrutiny Report

Anti-Social Behaviour

June 2013

Prepared by: **ETHOS**

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- 1. Acknowledgments**
- 2. Purpose**
- 3. Approach to ASB Project**
- 4. Findings & Recommendations**
- 5. Conclusion**
- 6. Comments by Director & Service Manager**
- 7. Next Steps**
- 8. Comments by SMT**
- 9. Comments by Board**
- 10. Action Plan**

1. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The members of the **ETHOS** who took part in the project

- **Peter Browne:** North Liverpool
- **Beth Edwards:** Runcorn
- **Margaret Guppy:** South Liverpool
- **Joyce Lyle:** South Liverpool
- **Muriel O’Hanlon:** Kirkby
- **John Williams:** North Liverpool

ETHOS would like to thank the staff who took part in interviews and provided information during the course of the project. These included:

Neighbourhood Management: Niall McDonnell, Alan Everleigh, Mandy Ryan, Sam Pope, Lousie Cullen, Gareth Ellis

Business Intelligence: Sam Smith, Jolene Dunlope & Helene Reier

We would also like to thank the tenants who responded to the **ETHOS** survey.

The Scrutiny Project was facilitated & supported by

Jo Phillips: Resident Involvement Team Leader

Debbie Despres: Resident Involvement Officer.

2. PURPOSE

- The purpose of this report is to present the findings of ETHOS scrutiny of the **Anti-Social Behaviour** service
- The Scrutiny Project was carried out between **January and June 2013**.

3. APPROACH TO THE ASB PROJECT:

Scrutiny of the ASB service entailed an overview of current service delivery, performance and customer feedback to explore what currently worked well, identify where improvements could be made and recommend actions to implement these changes.

The project commenced in January 2012, and subsequently six members of ETHOS met weekly to complete the full process following our established project plan and scrutiny framework.

Stage 1: Fact Finding:

ETHOS considered the following information:

1. Anti-Social Behaviour Survey (*Currently under review during the time of the scrutiny project*)
2. Neighbourhood Services 2011-12 Year End Report
3. 2012 Self-Assessment of HCA Standards
4. Garston Under The Bridge Survey Report 2012
5. Neighbourhood Profiles- ASB Cases (*Castlefields, Beautiful North, Murdishaw & Riverside*)
6. Draft Business Intelligence ASB Survey for Tenants (*Survey not yet adopted during the time of the scrutiny project*)
7. Housing Quality Network Briefing: (ASB Update June 2012)
8. Tenant Exit Survey: 6 Month Update April-Sept 2012

The policy & performance data (as detailed above) was presented by Sam Smith & Jolene Dunlope from the Business Intelligence Team.

An **initial presentation & overview of the ASB service** was delivered by Niall McDonnell - Neighbourhood Housing Manager and Lead Officer for ASB

In addition to the standard data set managed by the Business Intelligence Team further performance, budget, and cost information was requested directly from service managers. This included:

- ASB cases by neighbourhood Jan 2011-Dec 2012
- ASB Case Type Report by District 2012-21013

Stage 2: Compare & Challenge:

Initial scoping of the project resulted in the identification of 5 Key Areas of Focus:

- **Focus One** : Performance, trends and satisfaction data
- **Focus Two**: Initial contact, access & information for tenants
- **Focus Three**: Action plans and support for tenants
- **Focus Four**: Local perception surveys
- **Focus Five** : Staffing & Resources for ASB

A number of key scrutiny activities were then selected to facilitate further exploration of the ASB service. The activities chosen were:

1. ETHOS ASB Survey
2. Literature & Document Review plus Benchmarking
3. Management & Staff Interviews:

Stage 3: Analysis & Recommendations:

A number of group sessions were held to share findings from the scrutiny exercises and agree recommendations for the service.

Stage 4: Implementation & Review:

The Service Manager & Directors were invited to meet with the panel to discuss the report findings. In addition, this also provided the opportunity for an Action Plan recording ETHOS' recommendations, Service Managers Response and agreed actions which will be monitored and reviewed after a period of six months.

4. FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 What Worked Well

- **ETHOS Survey**

ETHOS worked with Business Intelligence to compile a survey aimed at tenants that had reported incidents of ASB in the previous 6 months. The survey was accompanied by a letter outlining who ETHOS are in order to highlight tenant to tenant direct contact.

Results highlighted that the tenants that replied were positive in most areas, e.g. 92% found it easy to report their ASB incident. Full details of survey results as an appendix 1.

- **Staff Guidance via Case Management Process**

ETHOS were shown how the Case Management File is compiled for each ASB reported incident. This is kept internally and contains all action taken on each particular report. This works well to help staff to keep up to date on progress. Each file contains Risk Assessments and guidance notes and is tailored to each district, containing relevant referral forms.

- **Working towards Housemark Accreditation**

4.2 New approach to report writing

- Involvement of ETHOS members working with Officers to write, as well as present, reports. This has begun with ETHOS Chair, Muriel O'Hanlon working with Resident Involvement Officer to compile and write the ASB Report.
- Time frames would indicate that ETHOS need to deliver reports in a more timely and direct form. Therefore the ASB report will follow a pattern of highlighting specific areas of a service, rather than in depth scrutiny as in the past. ETHOS will continue to highlight areas of a service that they feel that Managers need to review.
- The current ETHOS recruitment is expected to result in the appointment of 5 new members with varied expertise and interest, who may in the future wish to contribute to the compilation and writing of reports.

4.3 What we didn't consider or explore

ASB Policy:

- A review of the existing Policy is currently underway by the Service Quality Team. Consultation is being completed with the ASB tenants panel and therefore ETHOS have not reviewed this document or its themes in any detail.

Face to Face Interviews with Tenants:

- Whilst focus groups with tenants have been a successful and valuable scrutiny tool in previous reports- due to the sensitivities and relating to ASB- ETHOS made a decision not to hold any face to face interviews with tenants who had reported ASB.

4.4 Project Challenges

Mid Project Changes:

- Minor changes to ASB procedures and documentation were made by the Service Quality Team during the course of the scrutiny project- prior to ETHOS findings and recommendations being shared with the service team. The comments and recommendations included in this report are therefore based on the existing documents and processes that were issued to ETHOS for consideration at the beginning of their project.

4.5 FOCUS ONE: Performance, Trends & Satisfaction Data:

4.5.1 Limitations of current REACT Database & performance reporting:

- Limited performance and trend reports were available for consideration by ETHOS at the outset of the project. Overall performance of the ASB service is monitored at local level (in the first instance by Team Leaders) but not centrally co-ordinated and produced by the Business Intelligence Team.
- The Local Offers data produced during 2011-2012 did however provide useful background and context for the project. Following the end of the Local Offers project this valuable and regular reporting against ASB performance and standards does not appear to be taking place via a formal mechanism.
- The ASB tenant panel which was established following the end of the Local Offers Group, does not appear to meeting regularly and no longer

receives ASB performance information that was initiated under the Local Offers Project- which is disappointing.

- The current REACT database used by the Neighbourhood Teams to manage and monitor ASB cases appears to have significant limitations. Extraction of data and performance information is difficult and lengthy. Regular collated reports comparing District / Area level data do not appear to be routinely completed/ published.
- At the request of ETHOS a report was extracted from the REACT system to highlight ASB cases by type and area- however this required time consuming and manual manipulation of the data by the Team Leader in order to produce. Evidently the issues with producing reporting information could have implications and restrictions for effective monitoring of volume and trends around ASB.
- The REACT system does not currently have an interface with the main LHT management system Orchard which is not ideal for sharing and co-ordinating information.
- It is acknowledged that a new module within Orchard Housing Management System is scheduled to be implemented in the future and this will assist to overcome current difficulties. However as of yet, no timetabled date has been secured for the implementation- and this is still to be prioritised alongside other outstanding Orchard modules.

4.5.2 Customer Satisfaction with the ASB service:

- An ASB satisfaction survey is sent to all complainants of ASB once their case is closed. Whilst this has been in place for some time- no formal collation of the findings is produced. Surveys are sent out by Neighbourhood Teams and the feedback considered at a local level only. ETHOS feel that it would be beneficial for tenant surveys to be designed, co-ordinated and analysed by the Business Intelligence Team- with reports being published and shared to encourage transparency and learning.
- At the time of the scrutiny project a draft survey from Business Intelligence had been available for some time but had not yet been adopted for use by the service teams. ETHOS were concerned that any valuable analysis of findings is not being captured and considered by the Districts.

- For the purposes of their project, ETHOS were therefore unable to utilise any existing tenant feedback as a basis from which challenge and scrutinise. A decision was therefore taken by ETHOS to work with and commission the Business Intelligence Team to undertake a specific and bespoke survey of ASB complainants in order to obtain recent tenant experience and gauge satisfaction of the service. The findings of this report are explored in detail in the section to follow and have been used as the main foundation for the projects focus.

4.5 Performance, Trends & Satisfaction Data

RECOMMENDATIONS

Performance Information

- Regular production of performance against ASB standard (similar to Local Offers format) should be re-introduced, published both internally and shared with the ASB Panel. (4.5a)

ASB Orchard Module

- Prioritisation should be given to the implementation of the ASB module on Orchard- as it is felt this will significantly improve monitoring, reporting and customer experience (4.5b)

ASB Satisfaction Survey

- ASB survey of all closed cases should be centrally co-ordinated by Business Intelligence. The findings and trends should be published & shared routinely across District Teams and ASB Tenant Panel (4.5c)

4.6 ETHOS Commissioned ASB Survey: Findings & Emerging Themes

4.6.1 Background to survey development

- ETHOS worked with Business Intelligence to create their own survey including developing the questions and identifying the scope of the survey sample etc.
- The survey was sent out to all tenants who had an ASB case closed between July 2012 and February 2013. 340 tenants received the survey of which 55 responded creating a response rate of 16.2%. The Business Intelligence Team indicated that this is comparatively low to other

surveys however this could be due to the sensitivity of the issue or the length of time elapsed since the case closure.

- Whilst the margin of error is high at $\pm 12.1\%$ the answers are still valuable as long as this is kept in mind when looking at the results. Analysis has been completed via District and provides valuable opinions from tenants as well as an indication of possible issues and trends.

4.6.2 Overview of tenant's experiences & satisfaction levels

% found it easy to report their ASB incident	92%
% had a named person to contact at LHT about their case while it was on-going	90%
% would report ASB to LHT in the future	89%
% thought the outcome of their ASB complaint was explained to them well enough for them to understand	87%
% happy with the time taken to contact them after reporting the incident of ASB	84%
% satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint	80%
% felt they were being kept up to date about their case while LHT was dealing with it	79%
% felt that LHT supported them throughout the process	76%
% had an LHT staff member help them complete an action plan	69%

ETHOS ASB Survey Findings May 2013

The above table provides a summary of the key findings from the ETHOS survey report, which is useful to highlight not only positive aspects of the current service provision but also where improvements are required.

A full copy of the report is included as an appendix, however specific evidence within the analysis have been used throughout the remainder of the main report for the basis of ETHOS scrutiny & challenge of the ASB service.

4.7 FOCUS TWO: Initial contact, access and information for tenants

- It is positive that the ASB service standards do include specific and measurable targets for initial contact and response to ASB reports. ETHOS were only able to utilise the published data collated during the Local Offers project during 2011-2012 as an indication of the

performance in this area- as performance information is not published centrally but monitored at local level only.

- During Quarter One: 100% targets were achieved for the majority of initial contact performance indicators including:
 - Contact made within 24 hours for the most serious cases
 - 5 Days for all other cases
 - Out of Hours Reporting passed to Housing Officer Next Day.

- This is similarly reflected in the survey responses, in which the service appeared to be most effective during initial stages of dealing with reports of ASB. Overall 91% of tenants found it easy to report ASB- Respondents living in North indicated they found it most difficult to report ASB but these lower figures may be a result of significantly more responses received from North Tenants.

4.7.1 Enquiries & Logging of ASB reports

- ETHOS were keen to understand the process involved for tenants making an initial report of ASB. All initial reports are made via the Customer Service Centre which are in turn passed directly to a nominated Logging Officer. This process has been put in place to ensure consistency across Districts and ensure every contact is captured and responded to directly (even in the designated Housing Officer is out of the office or on leave etc)

- Survey results indicate overall high level of satisfaction within initial contact and being provided with a name contact for their case (89% satisfaction achieved overall), however satisfaction reduced when tenants asked about “time taken to be contacted after reported incident” with 19% indicated they were unhappy.

- Specific comments made by respondents indicated re-occurring issues in relation to Officers being on Leave, and tenants having to chase up or contact several times prior to speaking directly to their designated Officer.

- Within the scope of their project ETHOS were unable to investigate this secondary contact in further detail- however they feel it would be beneficial for additional monitoring and quality checking in this area to be completed. Specifically, a Customer Services Audit could be completed by the Tenant Auditors project to test ASB initial processes, and it is hoped that the CRM system which now logs customer contacts could also be utilised by Team leaders as an effective monitoring tool.

4.7.2 LHT Website, Literature & Service Publicity:

In considering initial customer access and information a range of published information about ASB currently available both in paper and via the LHT website was analysed.

Whilst not only considering the range and quality of the material, the panel were keen to challenge whether current communication approaches addressed the main issues feedback within the survey. Specifically this related to being taken seriously, confidentiality, managing expectations and LHT being proactive in resolving ASB.

- **Website:**

Considered to be much better since recent LHT wide improvements to the website.

ASB Information found under heading of Communities- this may not be the most obvious path for a tenant to search for information. As with previous ETHOS recommendations- an A-Z search facility would much improve direct access to specific issues for tenants.

Links and Downloads include ASB leaflet/Harassment and Hate Policy/Hate Crime and Domestic Violence leaflet/Domestic Violence helpline which is positive

ETHOS unsure whether the full policy would be of much help to a worried tenant- whilst some specific telephone numbers of other agencies would be more helpful. The webpage content needs to be more tenants focused.

Online reporting facility is too generic- The link takes you to general LHT enquiry form and therefore there is no specific reference to ASB incident or reassuring text- such as confidentiality, indication of who will receive the form etc., structured questions to answer. ETHOS feels that this may discourage use- particularly initial reports.

On the whole the site is not as informative as the page could be, ETHOS feel that opportunities to reassure tenants and provide wider useful information have not been taken.

- **Literature & Sign Posting for Tenants:**

Main form of information and literature about the ASB service is a suite of 3 leaflets (DV, Hate Crime & ASB) found to be available within reception areas

No other form of information or advice appears to be available such as Frequently Asked Questions, Case Studies or Useful Contact Lists. This is

surprising given that tenant's main concerns are around processes, confidentiality and being taken seriously.

No details of support services or signposting to other agencies are available either in leaflet form or on the website. ETHOS have been advised retrospectively that Incident Diaries do contain signposting information. A copy of this documentation was not provided to the panel as part of the initial desktop review- and ETHOS have therefore been unable to provide specific appraisal of this.

Whilst this information is useful for Incident Diaries ETHOS also feel that more general signposting should be separately published in order that LHT improves its approach to supporting and promoting customer focus. This is even more disappointing when taking into account the extent of the resources noted within the self-assessment (2011-2012). For example

Partnership working (*ACTIVE, JAGS, Hate Crime Standards*)

Preventive initiatives (*smart water kits, Family Intervention Projects*) &

Support services (*WAVES, Welfare Visits*)

- **Publicity, good practice & successes**

Whilst the 2011-2012 Self-Assessment document for ASB contains extensive information and details of good practice, successes and achievements (*Partnership Working, Accreditation, Joint Standards, Preventative Initiatives, Support Offers*) none of these appear to be referenced or featured on the Website or other ASB information. ETHOS feels this is not only a missed opportunity in terms of celebrating successes and "Talking Louder"

4.7.3 Benchmarking Information of other Associations

ETHOS considered a number of neighbouring Associations Websites and publicity in order to identify examples of positive practices which they felt could be replicated or considered by the LHT team. Full details and benchmarking examples will be collated within the scrutiny evidence file which will be provided to the service teams at the end of the project. Some of the key examples include

- **Online Contact Forms:**

Specific forms for the purpose of reporting initial and on-going ASB cases. Reassuring language & confidentiality statements included on the form. Tenants are able to select from drop down list of ASB categories, answer guided questions to help capture key information. Reports can be made by a 3rd party or friend. Explanatory note provided about what will happen to the online

form, next steps etc. Email contact addresses are specific and received directly by an ASB Team (antisocialbehaviour@....)

- **Case Studies & Publicity about Commitment to ASB Services:**

ETHOS were impressed with a number of organisations who produced “Positive Action against ASB” information detailing overall ASB case actions and outcomes and Case Studies. Published on a quarterly basis ETHOS feel that this is beneficial in demonstrating to tenants that the organisation is committed and pro-active in resolving ASB (*Example copies will be available in evidence file*)

- **Signposting to other Agencies & Services:**

The most impressive organisations provide detailed information and links to both their own range of support services but also valuable information about other agencies and initiatives available to support people experiencing ASB. For example contacts for Local Councils (Noisy Neighbour Service) Police and Emergency Services are frequently noted.

- **General approach to content, language & customer focus**

Many organisations appear to effectively utilise reassuring language and directly address concerns associated with the reporting and dealing with ASB such as confidentiality, treating reports seriously, evidencing pro-active approaches to dealing with ASB.

Overall ETHOS feel that the PUBLISHED information and advice available to tenants associated with ASB is weak and could be greatly improved. Discussions with staff and indications from self-assessments provide evidence of a range of good services and support, however critically this information is not widely made available to tenants and reliance is upon verbal advice and signposting.

4.7 Initial contact, access & information

RECOMMENDATIONS

- o **Customer Service Audit to be commissioned by Tenant Auditors Project** (to monitor and appraise initial contact processes in more detail) **(4.7a)**
- o **Generic Web enquiry form should be made more specific for ASB reports** (including reassurances about confidentiality & response times) **(4.7b)**
- o **Produce signposting information & listings on internal support facilities, partner agencies and useful services relevant to ASB** **(4.7c)**

- **Publish Case Studies & ASB Actions for Tenants (4.7d)**

4.8 On-going communication & support to tenants- throughout the ASB Case

HCA Standards in relation to ASB include requirements to demonstrate that

“all tenants and residents can easily report ASB, are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the Organisation and are appropriately signposted where it does not”

Within the 2011-12 Self-Assessment and also during the course of discussions with ETHOS, Managers have indicated that the introduction of “ Case Management” & “Action Planning” processes for all ASB cases ensures that LHT compliant with this standard. ETHOS have therefore considered both core documents and asked specific questions relating to communication and support in their own survey of wider tenants. This feedback has been used to support and challenge their scrutiny findings.

4.8.1 Case Management Files: Process Guidance & Storage of Case Information

- The Case Management file is a valuable tool for staff which provides guidance through the process of dealing with varied elements of Anti-Social Behaviour case work. It provides structured tool for storing case details including valuable guidance notes and frameworks such as Risk Assessments.
- The branded Case Management file is kept within the Housing Team and requires officers to file core documentation and information relevant to the case. ETHOS felt that while valuable- it appeared “old fashioned” to be reliant on paper documentation to store information given the technological systems available for this purpose. In terms of Value for Money, data security & effectiveness it would appear that the Case Management File could and should be more effectively replaced by an information management system.
- In addition as the majority of the case file is for staff use only ETHOS questioned the requirement to have a “glossy” expensive to produce folder for internal use only. Particularly when (as outlined in the section to follow) the Action Plan documentation for tenants is basic word document with no accompanying folder or information.

- ETHOS acknowledges the positive aspects of the guidance and processes, which has obviously contributed to many tenants being very satisfied with the way in which their case was handled. This is supported by figures that indicate that 86% of survey respondents would report ASB in the future. Some of the relevant comments include:

“LHT did everything they could to help me and I’m very grateful”

“I found it to be a very positive experience and (named North Housing Officer) kept me fully informed throughout”

- ETHOS does however believe that caution needs to be exercised by staff in ensuring that each case is dealt with individually and responsively. Within their survey for example there was a marked reduction in satisfaction in “being supported throughout the process and kept up to date” in comparison with feedback about initial reporting. In particular the panel noted specific comments in relation to tenant’s experience of their ASB case.

“ Very process driven. Felt LHT only interested in closing case and not in impact on the community”

“I just feel the Housing Officer follows a process, but it appears to be limited as to what can be achieved”

4.8.2 Communication & Support

One of the strongest themes to emerge from the feedback received from tenants is frustration about being kept up to date with the progress of their ASB case. Analysis suggests that 24% of complaints did not feel they were kept up to date with their case, with South respondents feeling least informed. Specific reasons for this dissatisfaction included

“The lines of communication were not great to begin with but did improve over time, mainly due to my persistence”

“ People seem to be on leave for example, so sometimes reporting things not ideal and no-one seemed to take the time to let you know what’s happening so I ended up ringing several times so it’s stressful”

“ No one contacted me, I was doing the phoning”

Similar satisfaction levels were also received in relation to feeling supported through the process- with only 73% of tenants satisfied with this aspect of the service. Specifically respondents reported sense of not being taken seriously or questioning whether case was being dealt with effectively.

“ I feel there is a requirement for LHT to support the complainant in a greater capacity. The greater understanding and sensitivity was reserved for the perpetrator to such a degree that I was made to feel a nuisance”

“Its soul destroying. Feeling of no hope with treatment rendered. After the confidentiality leak I felt ignored”

“Not really, no sound device to record noise. My word against his. Very depressing”

- ETHOS were concerned about the level of dissatisfaction in relation to communication and support- particularly given that recently revised processes were intended to improve tenants experience. Whilst it is acknowledged that dealing with issues of ASB are complex, lengthy and require careful management of expectations; there clearly remains significant improvements required to ensure greater satisfaction is achieved. These emerging themes have also been useful to ETHOS in evaluating the success and effectiveness of the Action Planning Process which is explored in the section to follow.

4.8.3 Action Plans:

Action Planning was introduced in 2011 as a central process and documentation to be completed jointly with Housing Officer and tenant reporting ASB. Its intention was to ensure that a clear set of agreements and commitments between both parties are formally recorded for the duration of the ASB case.

- Action Plans should be completed with all complainants other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. complainant wished to remain anonymous) and where possible plans should be completed in person- however sometimes actions are agreed via the telephone and posted out for return. The monitoring of this process is overseen by the Team Leader within each District Office.
- Throughout their review of the ASB service; Action Planning has been referenced within self-assessments & interviews with Managers as the core process through which high quality and responsive service can be delivered. ETHOS were therefore disappointed in the findings from their survey which indicated that only 68% of complainants had completed an Action Plan with a member of staff.
- Significantly within these low figures; only a third of respondents in South had completed an Action Plan. Responses from Team Leaders indicated no specific or mitigating reasons for this lower completion rate- and suggested

that sample sizes were low and therefore could not signify a definite trend. Whilst ETHOS acknowledges the rate there remains clearly a lack of consistency in process across the Districts which requires more effective monitoring and recording. As a result of the survey finding it is understood that intermittent checks have been introduced which is reassuring however ETHOS feel a more robust monitoring and reporting on Action Planning needs to be adopted.

- ETHOS appraisal of the Action Planning documentation itself was also disappointing- in particular ETHOS noted a number of issues:
 - Overall the Action Planning documentation was felt to be very poor in terms of its tenant focus; much of the language and description appears to be orientated towards staff with abbreviations used and references to internal process.
 - Opportunities to provide reassuring statements in relation to confidentiality have therefore been missed. Similarly a specific section to confirm communication commitment is also omitted.
 - Whilst the Case Management folder used by staff is (unnecessarily) expensively branded and produced the Action Plan issued to tenants is a photocopied black and white document.
 - No specific accompanying guidance is issued with the plans which ETHOS feel could have ensured tenants were provided with comprehensive information and support. (e.g. service standards, how to complain, details of contact numbers, out of hours services & signposting)
 - Whilst the generic ASB leaflet is provided to tenants upon initial reports- this does not make any reference to Action Planning and is therefore not a suitable accompanying document.
 - ETHOS feel that specific supporting information for the Action Plan would help to address concerns and also manage expectations of how cases are likely to be managed and resolved. Evidently the absence of this information in the current documentation contributes to some of the feedback given by tenants within the survey who indicated

“Once filled out Action Plan, never heard back from them until they thought the situation was resolved”

“ Letter was sent saying perpetrator of ASB had been spoken to and case was closed no monitoring of this”

- A standard covering letter which is sent out with the types Action Plan has also been appraised by ETHOS. Again the panel highlighted a number of concerns about this correspondence:

- References are made to the typing up of the action plans, and implication that often the Plan has not been completed in person with the tenant. ETHOS feel it is important that wherever possible a face to face meeting should be held with complainant rather than reports dictated and typed up over the phone.
- Concern about the limited length of time tenant given to sign and return, which if not completed “assumption” made that the tenant agrees with the statement. The panel feel there should be an escalated procedure/ secondary contact made with the tenant to confirm they are happy with the document.
- Letter does not provide any reassuring wording which ETHOS feel is important in dealing with cases. No references are made to confidentiality or advice of what to do if the situation changes, escalates or if they have any concerns about the process. As is reflected within some of the comments from the survey the emphasis appears to be on the tenant to chase up and contact LHT.

4.8.4 Service Standards & Measuring Quality:

As briefly mentioned above, ETHOS would expect Service Standards to have been part of the documentation issued to tenants completing an Action Plan. Whilst the current generic leaflet does contain Service Standards these are out of date and require some significant improvement. In particular:

- **Action Planning:** No mention is made within the standards to Action Planning in spite of this “process” being highlighted by the team (in both self-assessments & interviews) as the main and principle improvement and commitment to tenants.
- **Targets** for initial response times provide specific commitments for tenants but also a valuable measurement framework for the purposes of monitoring quality and standards. However feedback from within the survey clearly indicates that specific commitments to communication throughout the process is vitally important. The current standards however only include a “vague” commitment to “keep all parties informed of progress”.

ETHOS feel that this standard should be reworded and if possible include a specific, measurable commitment. The panel discussed the value of having a menu of communication commitments suited to the ASB type. This could be formally adopted and referred to as part of the standards. The development of these commitments could then also be utilised and recorded formally within the Action Planning Process and documentation.

Order & phrasing: As the standards are a vital way of providing information, reassurance and commitment to tenants ETHOS feel that order and phrasing of the ASB standards is required. Suggested areas for consideration include:

- Beginning the standards with a first commitment to “Log cases onto our database” appears to be more a reflection of the priority of an organisation rather than that of tenants. It may be more valuable to open the standard with commitments that are a priority for tenants including communication & reassurance.
- Standards should acknowledge tenants concerns surrounding confidentiality, being kept up to date and being taken seriously. Reassuring and clear language could be adopted to more effectively address these key issues. In particular 3 consecutive bullet points within the current standards (confidentiality, keeping records and access to information) appear to undermine one another due to the order and phrasing.
- No information is provided within either the leaflets or standards about what tenants can do if they are unhappy with the service they receive or wish to escalate their complaint further.

4.8 Communication & support for tenants **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Monitoring of the completion of Action Plan should be more effective & consistent:** across teams to ensure discrepancies in service delivery is addressed. (4.8a)
- **Revision to Action Plans need to be completed.** This is to incorporate a number of recommendations detailed within the body of the report. (4.8b)
- **Standard Letter for Action Plan to be reviewed** Ensuring language is more tenants friendly and addresses issues in relation to confidentiality and reassurances. (4.8c)
- **Service Standards need to be updated to include Action Plan commitments.** Action Planning & measurable targets for each stage of the process are required within current Service Standards. Revised information should be issued alongside the Action Plan/ formal correspondence to tenants reporting ASB. (4.8d)

All of the above documentation should be reviewed in conjunction with the ASB Panel.

4.9 Staffing & Resources for ASB

4.9.1 Dedicated ASB Officers

- Currently when a tenant reports an incident of ASB they would speak to a member of the Customer Service Centre Team. The call would be put through to the Logging Officer where details would be recorded. The relevant Housing Officer would then take the tenant through the process of dealing with the ASB case. LHT do not currently have a dedicated ASB Team but cases are overseen by Team Leaders within each of the Districts.
- ETHOS note that comments from tenants who answered their survey show that there is a noticeable drop in satisfaction in communication during the current process. While the initial reporting process is good (with high levels of satisfaction) tenant feedback on feeling supported and being kept up to date on the progress of their case is much poorer. Asked how they felt that the service could be improved some respondents indicated a preference for a dedicated resource or team.

“Continuity. Obviously if people are on leave or left the job, maybe someone overall could re-examine the disputes”

“Perhaps a dedicated ASB Team, such as what other RSL’s have”

- The Service Manager has indicated that LHT do not currently feel that a specialist team to deal with more serious cases of ASB is warranted due to the current type of ASB LHT are dealing with. Furthermore they feel that Officers having knowledge of their patch and issues ensures they can offer better services than a specialist officer covering the whole District.

Whilst ETHOS acknowledge the benefits of the current patch officer approach- their scrutiny of the service and feedback from tenants has led them to feel strongly that a dedicated officer assigned to each district would gain the confidence of tenants, be in a better position to have an overview of ASB patterns in the area & complete specialist preventative projects to tackle ASB. Importantly ETHOS are concerned that poor performance in relation to communication and support may be as a result of Housing Officers having such an extensive and varied workload- and therefore feel that an officer with responsibility only for ASB would have more time and focus to ensure comprehensive support and communication to tenants.

4.9.2 Resources for ASB

As detailed in earlier section ETHOS recognise that strong partnership working is in evidence within LHT. Moreover they acknowledge that for many ASB cases (such as Fly Tipping, Noise, Children’s Nuisance etc) a number of

internal departments and services can assist in providing resolution to the problems. ETHOS were impressed with initiatives such as noise insulation and clean up days delivered jointly with Property & Environmental Services Teams. Whilst positive & successful in addressing noise disturbance for example, insulation projects were only piloted and not rolled out further due to limited resources. ETHOS feel that given the huge impact these projects have for tenants in reducing disturbance- further consideration should be given to allocation of additional budgets for such projects.

4.9 Staffing & Resources for ASB **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Consider the establishment of designated Anti-Social Behaviour Officers identified for each district.** Dedicated Officers could complete specialist project work to address ASB and complete robust monitoring on ASB trends and issues. (4.9a)
- **Explore opportunities to ringfence some budget with other teams for ASB initiatives** (4.9b)

4.10 Local Area Perception Surveys

- ETHOS were impressed with the project work completed within the Gartson Under The Bridge Area for its impact on addressing ASB within Local Neighbourhoods. In particular they felt the completion of an initial perception study of local people's issues and priorities provided the South Team with valuable insight and focus- from which they were able to shape future services and prioritise resources.
- Specific outcomes of the project including focused & intensive presence of the Housing Officer within the area to build up relations and confidence, and the identification of specific issues which were tackled jointly with LHT and partners. The approach has ensured that tenant's views and priorities have been central to influencing and shaping local services.
- Whilst a similar project has recently been completed for the Cornwallis Estate, this approach while evidently very successful is not used routinely across LHT. ETHOS however feels this would be an invaluable tool which should be adopted within all Districts in order to targeting resources and

achieve positive results in tackling ASB. Moreover if a dedicated officer was created- they would be able to work on this kind of project specifically.

4.10 Local Area Perception Surveys **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Local Perception Surveys & tailored approaches to be utilised across the Districts

- Neighbourhood perception surveys should be adopted by each of the District Teams as a useful tool to identify issues, priorities and target resources.(4.10a)

If a dedicated officer is established Link to dedicated officer could be a resource co-ordinator for this type of specific ASB project work.

CONCLUSION

Overall ETHOS were impressed by the co-operation and professionalism demonstrated by the staff and hope that the recommendations made as part of the project will be considered and implemented as part of improvements to the ASB service. ETHOS look forward to receiving an update as to the progress of the service Action Plan they have agreed as part of the scrutiny monitoring arrangements

COMMENTS BY DIRECTOR & SERVICE MANAGER

We would like to thank the Ethos panel for the work they put into considering the ASB service. We found the group to be knowledgeable, fair ,easy to work with and keen to help in taking the service forward, with a particular emphasis on how the service felt for the customer.

We think that the recommendations made (with the exception of the specialist officer) are all things that can be acted upon easily and quickly. The report will now be sent as additional information in support of our ASB accreditation submission and hopefully demonstrates how we value and act upon tenant feedback.

The accompanying Action Plan and agreed timescales have been jointly agreed by ETHOS and the respective service teams and will be reviewed by the ETHOS Panel after a period of 6 months.

NEXT STEPS

A Review of the ASB Action Plan will be completed in six months (**December 2013**)

COMMENTS BY EXECUTIVE TEAM

As per the scrutiny framework process, the findings for the report were presented to Executive Team

The Executive Team would like to thank ETHOS for their report. Once again, a really helpful piece of work has been produced and given us food for thought and some things to look to improve.

This time there are some recommendations around the staffing and ICT that go beyond the scope of the ETHOS; for instance, our ICT priorities are set in a business wide context and not just with regard to how we case manage ASB. That is not a criticism of the report but is an explanation as to the decisions that are taken. The report really helps to crystallise some areas that can be improved as well as praising staff for the service provided.

COMMENTS BY BOARD

As per the scrutiny framework process, the findings for the report were presented to Board in September 2013.

The Board would like to thank ETHOS for the work undertaken in this area. It is a complex and difficult area to look at and we welcome the report. The Board also acknowledges the comments from the Executive team about ensuring that recommendations take into account the wider picture. It is a really helpful report and it is pleasing to note that the ETHOS team were pleased with many aspects of the service.

ASB Action Plan

Ethos Scrutiny Report: ASB (2013)						
ACTION PLAN.						
Action Point Ref	Recommendation	Service Area Response/ ETHOS response (if required)	Action	Who	When	Status
	Performance, trends & satisfaction					
4.5a	Performance Information to be published and shared centrally & with ASB panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarterley monitoring information is currently published however not shared widely. - End of Year Reports are currently produced which capture performance in relation to ASB & Tenancy Management <p><i>*Above not shared with ETHOS within course of the project</i></p>	The new ASB Policy clearly states our intention to provide this information. Need to devise method whereby quarterly reporting is seen at Board level. Newsletters need to have a regular ASB performance article in standard format that shows levels and types of case	NMc (AW)	Quarter3 2013	
4.5b	Prioritisation of ASB Orchard Module	NM to discuss with AW where this sits in the overall IT plan. We can clearly still provide a service without the new module but its implementation will make our processes more streamlined	Recommendation to be considered by SMT/ Board	NM/ AW		
4.5c	ASB Satisfaction Survey to be co-ordinated & analysed by BI	We are piloting (in South) the CSC chasing non completed satisfaction surveys- ...	Will consider capacity and success rate of CSC before reviewing further	MR	Sept 13	
	Customer Access & Information					
4.7a	Customer Service Audit to be	- NM happy for audit to be commissioned.	- Audit Brief to be	RI Team	TBC within	

	commissioned		provided to Tenant Audiots Project		Audit schedule	
4.7b	Generic Web Enquiry Form Revised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NM agrees with recommended amendments. - Changes need to be agreed/actioned by Communications/ Business Intelligence Team responsible for Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communications/ BI Team to consider recommendations and provide response 	Comms/ BI Team	Need to agree timetable and feasibility with Comms team	
4.7c	Produce signposting information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New leaflets for ASB, DV and Hate Crime will all include useful contact details 	Leaflets finalised 2/8/13	NMc/ DJ/KM	Sept 13	
4.7d	Publish Case Studies & ASB activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only real forum for publishing case studies is in newsletters- not feasible to include case studies in information leaflets 	As discussed earlier- activity will be reported via newsletter and also in quarterly performance report to SMT and Board	NM	Quarterly wef Sept 13 and regular item in newsletter	
Action Plans & Support						
4.8a	Monitoing of Action Plans to be more effective	Agree that monitoring needs to be more tightly controlled , although would need to get addresses of some of recipients to ensure that a plan was not actually put in place	Officers should discuss cases in 1-2-1 and provide written evidence of action plan. Team leaders to monitor via PMF	Team leaders in each district	With immediate effect	
4.8b	Revision of Action Plan to be completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation accepted- agreed that revisions will be completed in consultation with the ASB Tenants Panel 	Include in Agendas/ Schedule for ASB Panel?	NMC	Next ASB forum to be held in August 13	
4.8c	Standard Letter to be reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As above 	As Above	NMc	As above	
4.8d	Service Standards to be revised to include Action Planning	The Service standards are correct in respect of timescales. Current ASB leaflet does not make reference to completion of	New ASB leaflet will resolve this issuex	NM	August 13	

	commitments	Action Plan				
	<i>Dedicated ASB Officers</i>					
4.9a	Consider establishment of ASB Officer	Service manager does not feel that this is necessary at this point. Arguments for and against but a generic service means that Neighbourhood Officers know both the issues and the people on their patches rather than a specialist officer who would need to build that knowledge over a period of time- difficulties with cover for holidays etc if only one officer in each team dealing with cases	One for further discussion but given the number and nature of cases I do not feel that this would have any particular benefit to service provision .			
4.9b	Explore ringfenced budget for ASB initiatives	- Area Housing Managers are already able to influence other teams budgets/ spending priorities- through Service Planning Days for example.				
	<i>Local Perception Surveys</i>					
4.10a	Perception Surveys & tailored approaches utilised across the Districts	Agree that perception surveys are a useful tool as evidenced in Garston UTB.	Need to consider capacity issues of district teams and B.I. Team leaders at district level to consider hot spots and use perception surveys where/if appropriate.	Team Leaders in each district	Quarter 4 2013	

Update on ETHOS current position

Current Position of Ethos- June 2013

Ethos is currently working in a structured and coherent way and is hoping to be even stronger in the near future after recent successful recruitment.

Ethos took part in an event at Trafford Hall on 28 February/ 1st March 2013 which involved reviewing the past year and forward planning for the year to come. Thanks to all staff who took part, including Sue Westwater, Andy Williams and others. The Resident Involvement Team facilitated and our thanks go to the team.

On 12th March 2013 myself, Chair and Joyce Lyle, Vice Chair presented the Ethos Sheltered Housing Report to the LHT Board, copies available on the LHT website. The report was well received and the Board expressed its thanks to Ethos members for the quality and depth of the report's findings and recommendations. Ethos would like to thank Debbie Despres, Resident Involvement Officer, for all her hard work in the compilation of all our reports. As well as the Sheltered Housing Report a plan for the coming year was presented to board, along with a rationale for our choices for scrutiny areas.

On 14th May 2013 Ethos carried out a review of Voids and Allocations. This was a successful event and details will be presented to Executive and Board separately.

Ethos look forward to working with new members on future projects as well as continuing the close links already established within the current team.

Muriel O'Hanlon- Ethos Chair