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Our Ref: WK/202410115 Housing Directorate: Customer Team Direct line: 01384 812120 Date: 15.07.2025

Mr D Austin

162 High Street

Lye

West Midlands

DY9 8LT

Dear Mr Austin,

# Re Housing Ombudsman Case - Reference WK/202410115

I am the Complaints Officer handling your Hosing Ombudsman investigation. I am writing in response to your correspondence with the Housing Ombudsman concerning the following matters:

* Alleged anti-social behaviour
* Your arrest by the Police

I have advised the Housing Ombudsman that I will not be raising a formal complaint regarding these issues. Below is an explanation for this decision.

DA: On this second reading, I notice a misprint ‘Hosing’ above; this induces a smile - I must regularly hose the front lawn after my neighbour’s dog!

You have submitted numerous reports to the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team, primarily concerning dogs, including dog fouling, claims of "indecent exposure" by dogs, and requests for the complete removal of dogs from the borough.

DA: Must immediately remark that I have never complained about "indecent exposure" by dogs – the Borough is misleading us here as dogs will not be aware of any problems in this regard, but, particularly in the case of my flat-dwelling neighbour, his pet is deliberately taken onto the High Street in order to perform its toilet; I hold that this is improper, public, indecent behaviour on the part of the owner and a likely breach of common law. Regarding the “complete removal of dogs from the borough” I suspect that Amelia is referencing my wish that pet dogs be kept off the (entire) nation’s streets, as in the example set by the Islamic Republic of the Maldives (I know of no other).

On 10 July 2025, you spoke with Paul VanVeen, ASB Team Manager, regarding your concerns. Paul explained that it is not appropriate to offer money for harm to come to dogs and clarified that dog fouling is not considered "indecent exposure." He also asked that you stop contacting the ASB Team about such matters, as they are not classed as antisocial behaviour. Continued contact of this nature may be deemed vexatious. If this persists, we may assign you a Single Point of Contact for any future communication with Dudley Council.

DA: The Council is over-reacting here and is providing evidence of the continuing victimisation of this individual; it is true that I recently contacted ASB over a dog-issue as a barking dog was again heard from some hundreds of metres away further down the High Street – I was advised that the issue should be reported to Environmental Health. I will, of course, attempt to use this channel in future, but it must be noted that contacting EHealth is currently difficult as they are ‘changing their systems’. It must also be noted here that the Council have recently accused yours of inappropriate reporting of Environmental Issues as part of a CPN, thrown-out in June by a Circuit Judge in the Magistrates! Seems to me that the Council simply do not want to hear of issues, even though its own ASB department was recently found wanting by the Housing Ombudsman! It is true that I had a long conversation with Paul VanVeen very recently, but, again, I made my claim that my neighbour, with many others, is ‘outraging public decency’ by deliberately toileting his revolting dog on the High Street – but VanVeen is ‘imself a dog-owner!!! Regarding my “offer [of] money for harm to come to dogs”, I did explain to Paul that I wish no harm to come to my neighbour’s dog (or any other), but I have searched, so far in vain, for somebody to deal with this pest in a humane, painless manner, rather like a vet, or a wildlife ranger, may deal with a ‘difficult’ or unwanted animal. The situation is becoming dire as I often feel, when watching my neighbour’s dog ‘taking its toilet’ and wondering if the faeces will be retrieved, if my life is worth living – Safeguarding recently sent an ambulance, but both of the paramedics were doggies! Little sympathy there!

On 7 February 2025, we informed you that your Community Housing Officer, Sophie Kendrick, visited your block to address dog fouling in communal areas. She reminded residents that dogs must be kept on leads and that waste must be properly disposed of. During her visit, no evidence of dog fouling was found.

DA: Sophie Kendrick may well have made a visit after some kind soul (maybe also sent by the Council) had removed any faeces, but the point is being missed, as the barking (often on entering the apartments), the urinating (which damages the lawns), the defecating (which gives rise to odour, even if faeces is retrieved) annoys at least this resident so dog-owners are in breach of any tenancy agreement (if not common law). Must also note here that so much mention of Sophie Kendrick is annoying as she is clearly ‘highly vindictive’, as well as a ‘poor-parker’ and a cynophile – would it not be appropriate for the Council to ask a ‘less-wilful’ individual to deal with this resident?

Sophie also spoke with tenants about alleged noise nuisance during this visit. No complaints were received from residents at that time, and no nuisance was witnessed. If you would like to report ongoing noise issues, please contact me so that diary sheets can be provided. These must be completed over a two-week period in order for Sophie to investigate in line with our procedures.

DA: I have complained repeatedly regarding the barking – please note that the retiring Sally Bourner (Police Commander for this area) said that she will be pleased not to be in receipt of complaints about barking dogs – the Council consider that the incidents are ‘isolated’ and take no action. I’m puzzled as to the Council’s stance on this issue – apart from the time taken (this response has already taken an hour!), we’re told that there’s a national shortage of housing (if only for asylum-seekers) so no inducement is required to attract tenants. I’m also puzzled as to why so many of the UK’s public officials are now so uncivilised – when these apartments were first commissioned, I’m told, no pets of any variety were allowed!

On 20 September 2024, we responded to a complaint you made about parking issues and dogs in the area. You were informed that we would not continue to respond to these matters, as they have been addressed multiple times by various officers, and no further action is possible.

Sophie wrote to you on 29 July 2024 and explained that financial constraints, introduced in October 2023 following a Cabinet decision, prevent us from implementing physical deterrents to people driving over green spaces. She also advised that this behaviour is a criminal offence and should be reported to the Police via 101.

DA: Regarding the parking issues, the Police flatly refuse to involve themselves on the raised local parking issues – the matter is currently with the Council Leader (who is investigating) and also with the LGOmbudsman (who will probably duck this one, as is usual – not sure why the LGOmbudsman is so ‘conservative’ (with a small c)).

Regarding your 2016 arrest, I previously wrote to you on 24 April 2024. I confirmed that I had spoken with the ASB Team and advised that any appeal must be made through the courts. Records related to your arrest are held by the Police, and you must contact them directly to request access. You have repeatedly stated that Dudley Council arranged your arrest. I must reiterate that the Council has no authority to instruct or influence the Police to carry out arrests. That decision rests solely with the Police, and any concerns must be addressed to them.

DA: Yes, as previously advised, I remain puzzled as to why the Council’s ASB department didn’t call and merely ask a few questions before, presumably, contacting the Police. Please recall that I was trying to arrange a fair one-on-one hearing (or two-to-two with appropriate representation) with the ASB bullies, and also trying to leave a few days of ‘high summer’ free to take my ageing mother on holiday, when two bobbies arrived at my door – the next step in the Police appeal is an expensive Judicial Review (or similar) where the result may, anyway, be similar, as several of my witnesses are now deceased; I’m merely trying to establish the Council’s role in this life-changing, brutal, farce.

**In summary**:

I will not be escalating a new complaint regarding these issues. However:

* Dog fouling or off-lead dogs in communal areas should be reported to **Dudley Council Plus** on **0300 555 2345** or online. If relevant to your block, Sophie will be notified.
* Reports of vehicles driving over green spaces should be made to the **Police via 101**, as this is a criminal matter.
* Noise nuisance reports can be investigated if you complete diary sheets for two weeks. For incidents outside of office hours, please call **0300 555 8283**.

I will share a copy of this letter with the Housing Ombudsman for their records.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you have the option to contact the Housing

Ombudsman or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) to review your complaint.

You usually have up to 12 months to do this, starting from the date you first knew about the matter you complained about, not from the date of this letter. The Ombudsman will normally only consider complaints made within that time but can decide to look at older complaints if there is a good reason to do so.

There are some matters the Ombudsman cannot or will not investigate, in these cases, they will clearly explain the reason for their decision, for example they may wish you to exhaust our complaints procedure before investigating.

The LGO looks at individual complaints about councils, all adult social care providers (including care homes and home care agencies), education and some other organisations providing local public services.

The Housing Ombudsman resolves disputes involving tenants and leaseholders of social landlords (housing associations and local authorities)

They investigate matters fairly and impartially and is free to use. To use this service, you will need to provide them with a copy of this letter, and our earlier responses from our complaint process to you, so they can consider your complaint.

The Ombudsman’s contact details are;

## LGO

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

PO Box 4771

Coventry

CV4 0EH

Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk/)

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Opening hours: Monday to Friday - 10am to 4pm (except public holidays)

## Housing Ombudsman

Housing Ombudsman Service

PO Box 1484

Unit D

Preston

PR2 0ET 0300 111 3000

info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

We are committed to learning from our complaints and improving the service we provide.

Regards,

Amelia Hudson

# Complaints Officer

The Customers Team

Housing

Dudley Council

Hou.customerfeedback@dudley.gov.uk

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