



## **AYLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

### **November 2024 Full Council Agenda Item 8.3 Southern Housing Group Properties, Dorman Avenue North**

#### **First Issue: Littering and Anti-Social Behaviour at Flats on Dorman Avenue North**

##### **Summary of Correspondence:**

Local residents and Aylesham Parish Council have raised serious concerns about persistent littering and anti-social behaviour at a block of flats on Dorman Avenue North. The car park and surrounding areas are plagued by rubbish accumulation, which has attracted rats and posed a public health risk. Despite past efforts from Southern Housing to address the issue, litter quickly re-accumulates, necessitating a more permanent solution.

Residents have reported that individuals frequently discard waste from their vehicles directly onto the ground. Although some community members have tried self-cleaning efforts, these are unsustainable, and the issue escalates with every cleanup attempt. Complaints made to Southern Housing have not resulted in lasting improvements.

In response, Aylesham Parish Council contacted several parties:

- **Moat Housing Representative** confirmed that the block in question does not fall under Moat's management.
- **HML Group** acknowledged that the car park and block are managed by an individual freeholder rather than by HML on behalf of the management company. HML has reached out to the freeholder to request an immediate solution to the littering issue and were asked to contact Aylesham Parish Council about this.

Additional complaints regarding anti-social behaviour, including littering, verbal abuse, and substance abuse, were shared with Aylesham Parish Council. Residents detailed instances of retaliation against those who voiced concerns, contributing to an unsafe and hostile environment.

The Parish Council has yet to receive a response from the freeholder or further updates from Southern Housing Group on effective long-term measures. We have also contacted District councillor Pout for support on the matter. The Council has continued to chase for a response, urging Southern Housing/the freeholder to engage more actively with residents and implement behavioural standards to reduce littering and improve safety.

### Photographs sent to the parish council:



### As of today 11/11/2024, we have received the following update:

I am currently the Housing Officer for the site and can advise that we have not received direct complaints from other residents regarding the issues highlighted, however, we are aware of the continued problems we are dealing with in regard to anti-social behaviour and inappropriate rubbish disposal. We do have a cleaner attends site on a weekly basis but am sure you can appreciate spends much of her time trying to get the block clean. We also have gardeners who have been attending on an ad hoc basis. I have spoken to the team this morning and arranged a regular weekly litter pick of the communal garden and car park area and will monitor this on a weekly basis whilst I am on site completing my estate inspection.

We are engaging with the residents living in the block to attempt to change behaviours and highlight the impact the behaviour has on other residents on the site, I am currently working alongside social services and children and families with several families within the block with support needs. We are also following our anti-social behaviour policy and issuing good neighbour agreements to all residents in this block which is the first step to taking formal action against individual households if evidence is received regarding individuals.

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### Second Issue: Broader Anti-Social Behaviour in other properties on Dorman Avenue North

#### Summary of Council Outreach to Community Safety Unit:

In light of escalating anti-social behaviour concerns related to properties on Dorman Avenue North, managed by Southern Housing, Aylesham Parish Council reached out to the Community Safety Unit at Dover District Council. The Parish Council highlighted its limited authority in addressing these matters but has a commitment to supporting residents by facilitating appropriate action.

In the Council's outreach to DDC, they requested:

1. **Guidance for Residents** – The Parish Council sought specific advice on how residents should report anti-social incidents effectively, including whether direct reporting to the Community Safety Unit would expedite responses.
2. **Potential Direct Intervention by the Community Safety Unit** – The Parish Council inquired whether the Community Safety Unit could offer direct support for cases escalated by residents.

A video file documenting a recent incident was attached to the Parish Council's email to the Community Safety Unit to underscore the severity of the situation. The Parish Council is awaiting further instructions from the Community Safety Unit on how best to assist residents, given its limited powers to act directly in these cases.