

Antisocial Behaviour Policy

There are different types of neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour. We distinguish between the severity and impact of different kinds of behaviour. We will respond sensitively and objectively in the form of either a telephone call, a letter, a home visit or a meet with a member of staff within the office; whatever is felt most appropriate.

Objectives

The objectives of the policy are to ensure that:

All tenants and their neighbours may enjoy their tenancies while causing the minimum amount of disturbance to others and being undisturbed by the activities of other neighbouring residents.

We help tenants and communities find their own solutions to problems of nuisance neighbours and provide advice and details on ways to address neighbour problems.

We give clear guidelines to staff, supported by written procedures, on how to deal effectively with reports or incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Approach and Method

Day-to-day responsibility for the operation and monitoring of this policy lies with all staff. However any persons representing the Trust has a responsibility to ensure that the policy is applied as instructed. The policy will be implemented through:

- Devising procedures for compliance with the policy
- Ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations
- Monitoring adherence to policy requirements (ACT)
- Explaining at tenancy sign up how issues of antisocial behaviour are addressed by the Trust, thus encouraging tenants to work with us and to understand their responsibilities as a tenant in terms of ensuring good relations with neighbours
- Using different ways to resolve neighbour disputes, including multi- agency working with one or more of the following: mediation services, advice/support agencies, social work departments, police, local authorities, local schools and local community groups.
- Keeping complainants informed as clearly as possible of the outcome of any investigation undertaken by staff, while respecting the confidentiality of information made available to us.
- Taking legal action normally as a last resort when all other avenues have been exhausted.

Antisocial Behaviour Procedure

All incidents of ASB are logged on our electronic housing management database (ACT). This enables us to effectively manage any complaints by:

- Keeping a permanent record of all incidents
- Establishing dates and times and method of communication between staff and complainant (and any other persons involved)
- Recording specific detail as to the nature and extent of problems.
- Responding and resolving within required timeframes

Performance of this policy will be monitored by an annual report including:

- ASB outcomes
- Repetitive incidents
- Involvement of other agencies
- Legal action taken
- Evictions
- Outcomes of any customer satisfaction surveys

Availability

This policy is available to all staff through the shared drive (W:) and a paper copy will be held in the office. Requests for a copy of this policy can be made by any persons outside the staff team and a copy will be made available to them.

Review

The Policy will be reviewed annually with regard to:

- Applicable and current legislation, rules, regulations and guidance
- Any changes within the organisation
- Continued best practice.

Confidentiality

Any information given to us in any context of a complaint will be treated in the strictest confidence. Identity will not be divulged to the perpetrator of the ASB without express permission from the complainant, and where necessary, vice versa. We may however need to share information when necessary with external agencies such as, the Police for the prevention and detection of crime and disorder and antisocial behaviour; other local councils and registered social landlords (Housing Associations) about perpetrators of ASB; Social Services, Fire Service; Probation; Health.

Response

Stage 1

We will acknowledge all complaints of ASB in writing or e-mail within five working days.

We will respond to cases involving racial harassment, threats or actual violence within one working day – or on the same day if resources permit.

When we receive a complaint, we will assess the type of ASB being complained about to determine how quickly we need to respond.

- Level one: High risk/urgent - response within one working day. This will apply where there has been a serious incident or potential risk to the complainant.
- Level two: Medium risk/persistent nuisance – response within three working days. This will apply where there is no immediate risk to the complainant and will include for example noise complaints, nuisance vehicles and ongoing issues relating to pets and animals.
- Level three: Low to no risk/non-urgent – response within five working days. This will include issues arising from a clash of lifestyle and other ASB, such as neighbour disputes where there is no evidence and unlikely to cause harm in the short term. It will also include one-off complaints and incidents where there is not enough evidence to show that a nuisance exists at all. Most incidents judged to be low to no risk will be recorded only. Mediation will be offered but it is unlikely that there will be any further action. This applies to anonymous complaints. Generally, these will be recorded for information only as we may not be able to gather all the evidence needed. In the event of serious allegations, where there are safeguarding or other such issues of concern, we will involve other partners in order to take appropriate action.

Stage 2

We will take all relevant information about the complaint and decide on the most effective and appropriate way forward. This may be a telephone call to alleged perpetrator and/or offering mediation to both parties. It may also be suggested that parties keep a diary of events detailing dates and times if the complaint is of continuous behaviour.

Where necessary, we may work with Environmental Health professionals in providing advice and in the event that medication and intervention by the Trust does not work, we will advise our customers to contact Environmental Health who can advise on steps to take i.e. noise recording equipment/diary sheets.

We will use the method below when dealing with any form of complaint:

- investigate the complaint;
- evaluate the evidence; and
- take appropriate action to resolve the issue.

We use our electronic housing management system as an incident management tool and this enables us to be consistent.



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