



This Policy details how we manage cases of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and Neighbourhood Management (NM); what may constitute ASB or NM; how we work with partners to seek an effective resolution; and how we aim to support complainants and deal with respondents, in line with effective use of legal tools at our disposal in line with our tenancy agreements.

Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Management Policy

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Part 1

About this policy

Document management

Directorate	Housing, Care and Support
Policy sponsor	Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer
Policy owner	Director of Housing and Customer Service
Policy author	Director of Housing and Customer Service
Summary	This Policy details how we manage cases of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and Neighbourhood Management (NM); what may constitute ASB or NM; how we work with partners to seek an effective resolution; and how we aim to support complainants and deal with respondents, in line with effective use of legal tools at our disposal in line with our tenancy agreements.
Target audience	Housing colleagues – Housing Management, Lettings, Legal Enforcement, Customer Services, Care and Support

Review process

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Part 2

Overview

Intent

This policy sets out how we manage anti-social behaviour (ASB) and neighbourhood management (NM) in our neighbourhoods and localities across the Group.

This Policy details our approach and commitment to tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) and neighbourhood management (NM) in order to provide safe, secure and clean neighbourhoods and to create sustainable communities. Longhurst Group recognises that everyone has a right to enjoy their own lifestyle but only when it does not interfere with the rights and quality of life of other residents.

Longhurst Group (the Group) recognises that ASB and NM can have a detrimental effect that can seriously affect the lives of individuals and communities. It is also recognised that what is perceived as 'low level' anti-social behaviour, when targeted and persistent, can have devastating effects on a victim's life. The Group is therefore committed to treating all reports seriously and will take timely, effective and consistent action to tackle all forms of ASB at the earliest opportunity.

The Group, however, also recognises that not everything can be deemed to be ASB despite it being perceived as such. In these circumstances we would encourage customers to resolve their disputes amicably by communicating with each other to reach a mutually agreed resolution.

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Understand and define what ASB and NM is;
- Differentiate the cases that are either ASB or Neighbourhood Management by triaging at initial contact;
- Detail the legal and regulatory framework that provides us with the tools to respond to ASB and with which we are required to comply;
- Outline our approach and commitment to dealing with ASB and NM effectively and efficiently;
- Outline how we will assess the risk to complainants and undertake a victim centered approach; and
- Monitor performance to assess the quality and effectiveness of service.

Policy statement

This policy supports the Group's values and is a commitment to improving lives and supporting colleagues by prompt and effective management of the ASB and NM policy.

In responding to reports and allegations of ASB or NM we will:

- Work in partnership with the Police, Local Authorities and other partner agencies to respond effectively to reports;
- Provide a supportive and safe environment to customers to encourage reporting and to make reporting accessible and easy;
- Treat people fairly and sensitively during our investigations and base our response

on the evidence available.

- Ensure any information provided to us in respect of a report made is treated in the strictest confidence, for example from witnesses and via court action (however it should be noted that in certain circumstances this principle may not apply, for example in cases of child protection);
- Assess the vulnerability of customers (complainants and respondents) and offer assistance if appropriate and available, including a referral to our Safeguarding Team if appropriate;
- Enforce tenancy and lease conditions, using effective case management interventions and a balance of prevention and support measures to include legal and non-legal remedies;
- Encourage customers to resolve their disputes amicably by communicating with each other and offer mediation where appropriate;
- Be realistic with the response that we are able to offer;
- Manage expectations of customer by being transparent with what is dealt with as ASB and what would be responded to as a Neighbourhood Management case;
- Publicise our successes to raise awareness of our work and to encourage further reporting;
- Monitor our performance to assess the quality of our service and compliance with this policy, the ASB and Neighbourhood Management procedure, Noise procedure; and
- Ensure customers are made aware of the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreement.

Scope

The terms 'Longhurst Group' and 'the Group' incorporate all member companies and subsidiaries.

This policy applies to all parts of the Longhurst Group ('the Group') including any subsidiaries. The policy will provide a clear and consistent approach across the Group. This policy relates to the management of rented homes (including Care and Support), shared ownership and other leasehold homes, however some of the remedies available to tackle reported issues are only available for rented homes.

The policy does not form part of any colleague's contract of employment and the policy may be amended at any time.

Part 3

Policy details

Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Regulator of Social Housing Regulatory Framework, specifically the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, requires registered housing providers:

- To co-operate with relevant partners to help improve social, environmental and economic wellbeing in areas where they own properties; and
- To work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.
- In tackling ASB we will ensure that we comply with all appropriate legislation and regulations. We will make full use of all powers made available to us and work in partnership with other agencies to ensure the effective use of any powers available to them to ensure a swift and effective response to any incidents of ASB.

Definitions

'Anti-social behaviour' is the broad term used to describe a range of nuisances, disorder and crime that affect people's lives. It covers many types of behaviour that vary in nature and severity, many of which are open to interpretation.

Issues that could constitute ASB are listed in Appendix A.

There is currently no single definition of ASB which is commonly used nationally. However, the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, which is the most recent legislation for ASB, introduced a series of different definitions for different purposes. These definitions are:

- Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person;
- Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises; and
- Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person. ("housing-related" means directly or indirectly relating to the housing management functions).

'Vulnerable Person' – a vulnerable person is one whose experience and / or effect of harm as a result of the incident is likely to be more significant because of their individual personal circumstances and the conduct causes an adverse impact on their quality of life. Adverse impact includes the risk of harm, deterioration of their health, mental and / or emotional wellbeing or an ability to carry out normal day to day routine activities due to fear and intimidation.

'Repeat Victim' of ASB – repeat victimisation occurs when the same person or address is subjected to a third incident of ASB within a rolling 12-month period.

'Hate Crime Repeat Victimisation' is where a person or immediate family member suffers more than one hate incident in a 12-month period following the date the first crime was reported.

Neighbourhood management' cases are defined by Longhurst Group as cases that do not meet the threshold of anti-social behaviour. Please refer to Appendix A for a non-exhaustive list of these case types.

Managing Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Management

Responding to Reports of ASB and Neighbourhood Management Issues

The Group will make it easy to report ASB and Neighbourhood Management issues and we have adopted a range of methods to ensure we are accessible to all customers.

We will:

- Respond to high-risk incidents of ASB within 1 working day; and
- Respond to all other reports of ASB and Neighbourhood Management issues with 5 working days.

Case Management

We will provide complainants with a named Officer and/or case reference number.

As part of the initial assessment, we will establish if the report is ASB or Neighbourhood Management issue. We will establish if the complainant(s) are a repeat victim and consider this in any response. We will also review any potential vulnerability and the risk of harm to the complainant by completing a vulnerability matrix. Further risk assessments will then be completed throughout the case in accordance with the ASB and Neighbourhood Management procedure. We will also complete a vulnerability matrix for respondents where appropriate.

An initial action plan will be agreed with complainant(s). We will take into account the outcome of the vulnerability matrix and further action plans will then be completed as and when appropriate until case closure. Referral and signposting to support agencies will always be considered and completed where available and appropriate. A referral to our Safeguarding Team may be made depending on the circumstances of the case and if there are any changes of circumstance throughout the duration that the case is open.

Multi-Agency Partnership Working

The Group recognises that the responsibility for dealing with ASB and Neighbourhood Management is not the sole responsibility of one agency, although the role of the Group could be critical. Successful and effective management and prevention depends on the freedom to exchange information between different organisations and the willingness to tackle issues in partnership in line with GDPR guidelines.

We will participate appropriately in local area partnerships and protocols with a view to addressing issues at a local level.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Any information provided to us will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be used or shared for any other purpose without the consent of the person who has provided it. However, there are certain circumstances where these principles might not apply, for example in cases of Safeguarding. |

Part 4

Policy implications

Roles and responsibilities

All persons involved with the Group, whether Board Member, or employee have delegated responsibilities. The key roles and responsibilities are listed below.

Group Board

The Board is responsible for ensuring that there is an effective policy with controls in place, but delegation is the Management Team of the Group.

Executive Management Team

The Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors collectively are the officers responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Group's objectives in this policy.

Policy Sponsor – Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer

This person has strategic responsibility for the policy and how it relates to business plans, key strategies and other elements of the policy framework.

Policy Owner – Director of Housing and Customer Service

Responsible for the policy's suitability; effective implementation; and commissioning new policy development and periodic policy review.

Policy Author – Director of Housing and Customer Service

Responsible for drafting a new policy and proposing any amendments to an existing policy.

Data Protection – Data Protection Officer

Responsible for identifying, assessing and mitigating privacy risks with data-processing activities that fall within the policy.

Customer Engagement Team

Responsible for leading on policy consultation with customers and the Customer Forum.

Operational Responsibility

Operational responsibility for the Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Management Policy is held by the Director of Housing and Customer Services.

The Housing Management Teams will manage cases of ASB and Neighbourhood Management in accordance with the ASB and Neighbourhood Management Policy and Procedure with advice and support from the Legal Enforcement Team.

Data protection

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been conducted to ensure that only data relevant to the case management is collected and stored and that access to this information is restricted to only necessary individuals. The data remains live for the entire tenancy period plus 6 years after.

Safeguarding

In order to effectively deal with ASB and NM this policy needs to be read in conjunction with Longhurst Group's Safeguarding policies and procedures in order to ensure all customers safety and welfare are prioritised. Risk assessments are conducted throughout the case management for the complainant and respondent.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The Group is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following protected characteristics; Age, Disability, Race, Gender Reassignment, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity.

Complaints and feedback

Any formal complaints of service are dealt with utilising the formal complaints policy and procedures. There are also satisfaction surveys attempted with all closed cases. Responses are reviewed and appropriate recommendations and learning points are implemented.

Risk analysis

The Risk Analysis section within the Policy Development Plan (PDP) identified the following risks and mitigating actions:

- Decreased tenant satisfaction and tenancy sustainability.
- Increase of formal complaints and tenancy terminations.
- Increased damage to properties.
- Potential loss of life.
- Increased legal costs through not having early interventions.
- Increased staff turnover.

These risks can be mitigated as much as practicable by following the policy and the associated procedures and processes when managing cases of ASB and NM.

Evaluation, review and performance reporting

This policy will be reviewed on a Triennial basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. A policy review may also be required earlier, in response to internal or external changes for example changes in legislation. Prompt and effective action will be taken where improvements are identified.

We will monitor our performance in managing ASB and Neighbourhood Management through regular case audits and reports. ASB Advisors meet with their Housing Officers each week to review live ASB cases.

Summary of local variations

None.

Part 5

Compliance

Legal and regulatory compliance

This policy fully complies with the Group's legal and regulatory obligations.

- Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community regulatory standard
- The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- The Data Protection Act 2018

This list is not exhaustive, and policy authors will undertake thorough research and/or seek professional advice to ensure the Group meets its obligations and complies with the current and relevant legislation and regulations.

Related policies

- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Starter Tenancy Policy
- Hate Crime Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Complaint Handling Policy (Managing unacceptable customer behaviour)

Part 6

Appendices

A. Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Legislation	The legal requirements that must be followed.
Policy	A statement of intent describing our approach towards a particular activity or area – usually comprising a set of rules or standards that must be followed.
Policy Development Plan (PDP)	The document used to support planning policy development and review.
Procedure	An agreed way of doing things that describes how a policy will be implemented. The specific steps and/or actions that must be taken to put policy into practice and ensure a consistent service.
Regulation	The rules or standards set by a governing body such as the Housing Ombudsman, Regulator of Social Housing and Financial Conduct Authority.

B. Associated documents.

The following documents are associated with this policy:

- Policy Approval Control
- Policy Development Plan

C. List of Issues that could constitute ASB.

Issues that could constitute ASB include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Noise nuisance (Please refer to the Noise Procedure)
- Verbal abuse/ harassment/ intimidation/ threatening behaviour
- Hate related incident (based on race, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion age, etc.)
- Vandalism/ graffiti/ other deliberate damage to property or vehicles
- Using or dealing drugs/ substance misuse
- Alcohol related
- Domestic abuse
- Physical violence
- Misuse of communal areas
- Nuisance from vehicles
- Pets and animal nuisance
- Criminal behaviour

D. List of issues that would not constitute ASB.

Issues that would not constitute ASB include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Noise transference between properties
- Noise caused by:
 - Babies crying
 - Children playing
 - People talking
 - DIY (at reasonable hours)
 - General living noises i.e., toilet flushing, walking on floor
 - Vacuuming and Washing Machine (at reasonable hours)
- Garden condition
- Property condition
- People congregating in communal/public spaces
- Cats going into gardens
- Children playing
- Parking issues including resident parking (not involving element of ASB)
- Littering or fly-tipping
- Garden nuisance