

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY

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ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This strategy outlines Lanarkshire Housing Association's approach to the management of antisocial behaviour (ASB), in compliance with the Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004.
- 1.2 LHA will ensure compliance with legislation, good practice and the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Legislation defines a person commits (ASB) if they: "act in a manner that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress; or pursues a course of conduct that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress to at least one person not of the same household as them."
- 1.3 We are committed to effectively manage our tenancies and to continuous improvement in service delivery.
- 1.4 To effectively manage tenancies, we have successfully developed partnerships with local authorities, Police Scotland and Health and Social Work professionals, in addition to local RSL's and wider support agencies. We acknowledge ASB problems often affect more than one housing tenure and accordingly a multi-agency partnership approach will be utilised to tackle local area problems.

2.0 COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATORY STANDARDS - SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER

- 2.1 This policy adopts the principles of the Scottish Social Housing Charter (the Charter) to ensure standards and outcomes are achieved through efficient management of services.

In particular we will address the following aspects of the Charter:

- **Charter Outcome 1 - Equalities:**
'every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services'.
- **Charter Outcome 2 – Communication**
'tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides'.
- **Charter Outcome Outcome 6 – Neighbourhood and Communities**
'Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure as far as reasonably possible that: 'tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe'.

- **Charter Outcome 11: Tenancy sustainment**
'tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home: and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations'.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 We aim to ensure our estate management services are effective and appropriate in promoting sustainable tenancies and communities.
- 3.2 We aim to ensure our estates are safe places to live and our housing stock remains in demand. We will monitor and address any emerging problems in order to alleviate any decline in demand for specific areas.
- 3.3 We aim to address anti-social behaviour both on our own, if this relates specifically to tenants within an estate, and in partnership with others in a mixed tenure estate. We will use a multi-agency approach to effectively utilise enforcement of legislative powers, in addition to local initiatives to prevent and tackle ASB in our communities.
- 3.4 We will help and support tenants who are finding difficulties in sustaining their tenancy because of estate management or anti-social behaviour issues.

4.0 ADDRESSING ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- 4.1 Tenants are made aware of their responsibilities in our Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement (SST) which confirms that 'Anti-social' means causing or likely to cause alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance to any person, or causing damage to anyone's property. Harassment of a person includes causing the person alarm or distress. Conduct includes speech. A course of conduct must involve conduct on at least two occasions
- 4.2 The Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 provides a range of powers to tackle ASB and alleviate activities which may contribute to ASB. We aim to address emerging local problems proactively, pursuing appropriate tenancy and legal actions in response to specific or identified tenancy or area problems.
- 4.3 We will assess incidents of reported ASB in compliance with our Estate Management Policy and procedures which were formulated to meet Charter Indicator 19 which details 'that landlords set timescales for managing and resolving their anti-social behaviour cases. It is acceptable for timescales to vary depending on the severity of the anti-social behaviour'.

Our anti-social response timescales were subject to tenant consultation at a focus group meeting held in 2016. During this consultation tenants agreed with the categories proposed for ASB complaints as follows:

1. **Severe/criminal**
2. **Serious**
3. **Breach of tenancy**
4. **Low level nuisance**

The tenant focus group also approved response timescales as follows:

Category 1 – Severe/Criminal

Severe/criminal category would include allegations of drug dealing, criminal/violent behaviour, serious harassment, hate crimes, domestic abuse or serious damage to property.

Response time - 1 working day then progress in 1 working day

Category 2 – Serious/Persistent

Serious/persistent complaints, persistent noise (including loud music/banging), abusive or threatening behaviour, harassment and minor damage to property

Response time - 3 working days and progress in 3 working days

Category 3 – Breach of Tenancy

Disputes about communal areas, minor noise nuisance and lifestyle clashes.

Response time – in 3 working days and progress in 10 working days

Category 4 - Low Level Nuisance

One off parties and normal living noise.

Response time - advice given at point of contact and follow up in 20 working days

- 4.4 We will establish Estate Based Plans where required, to assist in mapping support for identified estates or area problems. Estate management budgets may be made available to support particular problems including close cleaning, no ball games signs and area clean ups. In addition, low demand initiatives will be used to tackle identified allocation difficulties.

5.0 INFORMATION SHARING

- 5.1 We share information with the local authority, taking account of the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and we have in place a signed protocol with Police Scotland, covering exchange of information under Section 139 of the Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004.
- 5.2 We will notify Police Scotland of any incidents of concern within estates to allow mapped police support to areas requiring special attention.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 6.1 We are committed to promoting equality and diversity within our communities. Antisocial behaviour, which targets individuals specifically because of race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or any other reason, will not be tolerated. We will ensure incidents of this type are properly recorded, monitored and fully investigated. Our racial harassment procedures will be implemented to ensure minorities are not disadvantaged in any way.

7.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 7.1 We will report to the Housing Services Sub Committee on actions to address ASB and report on any emerging estate problems.
- 7.2 We will complete and return statistical details on ASB to the Scottish Housing Regulator in our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC).
- 7.3 We encourage tenant feedback on this service through our independent tenant satisfaction survey, undertaken every 5 years.
- 7.4 We will review this policy on a 3 yearly basis.