

Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

1.0 SCOPE

Purpose

- 1.1. This document sets out whg's Policy towards managing incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), which is in accordance with Government guidance.
- 1.2 We define ASB as any behaviour by any individual or group that adversely and unreasonably affects the quality of life of our customers or communities.
- 1.3 We recognise that unchallenged ASB can have a devastating impact on individuals and communities. ASB can be complex and emotive for all parties, but resolving ASB is recognised as a key element in creating great neighbourhoods where people and communities flourish.
- 1.4 We will not tolerate ASB in or around properties we own or manage. We are committed to ensuring our customers have the right to enjoy their home and community quietly and peacefully.
- 1.5 We will support and assist customers to resolve matters of ASB in order to sustain their tenancies and preserve their residential quality of life.

Legal and regulatory framework

- 1.6 Within the Regulatory Framework, the Neighbourhood and Community Standard states 'that Registered Providers shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own.' The Standard expects Registered Providers to demonstrate a strong focus on preventing ASB and take prompt, appropriate and decisive action to deal with ASB before it escalates.
- 1.7 We have a range of legal powers to deal with ASB. These powers are contained within the Housing Act 1996, the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, the Housing Act 2004 and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The legislation is supported by the Home Office's 'Statutory Guidance for Frontline Professionals' July 2014.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Prevention

- 2.1. We aim to maintain sustainable communities where residents form relationships with their neighbours, take pride in their surroundings and are engaged positively in employment, education or training.
- 2.2. We will make new and returning customers aware of the impact and consequences of perpetrating ASB.
- 2.3. We will prioritise the prevention of ASB in areas where it is most prevalent and severe and will work in partnership with other stakeholders such as the Police and Local Authority.

Intervention

- 2.4. We adopt a problem orientated approach to resolving ASB and will work with all associated parties to find a satisfactory resolution to the problem.
- 2.5. We will respond to and start an investigation into all reports of ASB from customers as quickly as possible, and always within three working days. We will update these customers regularly with the frequency and means of contact agreed at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.6. We will show customers empathy and will encourage all parties involved in any dispute to do the same.
- 2.7. We will seek to support victims and take action against perpetrators where through thorough investigation individuals that may fit into either category are identified. We will also consider how vulnerable customers can be supported.
- 2.8. We will work with any of our customers whose behaviour is deemed anti-social and help ensure that their actions do not have a negative effect on anyone else's quality of life. Should the person(s) involved be unwilling or unable to change their behaviour then we will take appropriate and proportionate enforcement action. We will liaise with the Police, Local Authority and other relevant agencies to support them in taking action to resolve ASB perpetrated by a non-whg customer against a whg customer(s).

Enforcement

- 2.9. We will take a tailored approach to tackling more serious or persistent cases of ASB. This approach will depend on the frequency and severity of incidents and vulnerabilities of those involved. We will work with partner agencies where appropriate.

- 2.10. In seeking to resolve ASB, we will use the full range of enforcement tools and legal powers available where at our discretion we feel it is reasonable and proportionate to do so.
- 2.11. We will use CCTV to ensure the safety of communities and use responsive patrols to gather evidence and resolve ASB, where appropriate and in line with our CCTV Policy.

Support

- 2.12. We will use a range of strategies to address reports of ASB expeditiously to minimise the impact upon our customers and communities.
- 2.13. We will work with partner agencies to ensure early intervention in all reported cases of ASB and will work with non-whg customers where appropriate, at our discretion. With regards to Leaseholders and Freeholders, we will investigate, but the full range of services provided by whg that are paid for by tenants through their rent are not available. Leaseholders and Freeholders are expected to access the statutory services available to them.
- 2.14. We will encourage and support victims to continue to live in their whg home and work with us to resolve any problems in their community in order to preserve residential quality of life and sustain their tenancy. We will only consider rehousing customers in exceptional circumstances.
- 2.15. We will investigate reports fully, impartially and adopt a corroborative approach inviting all parties involved to contribute to a satisfactory outcome wherever such an approach is feasible. Our preference will always be for contact with customers to be in person.

3.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- 3.1. We will keep records of all reported cases of ASB and monitor the data to improve performance, report trends and tailor our services to the needs of our communities. An annual report on performance in dealing with ASB will be submitted to the Customer Experience Committee.
- 3.2. We will benchmark our performance on dealing with ASB against other Registered Providers and implement learning and best practice.
- 3.3. We will periodically undertake compliance audits to check that practice reflects this Policy and relevant operational procedures. We will implement any recommendations to ensure continued compliance.
- 3.4. We will undertake regular casework reviews to ensure we are delivering a consistent and effective approach to ASB and customers receive a high quality

service.

- 3.5. We will deal with complaints from customers about the quality of our handling of ASB matters through our Customer Experience Policy and Complaints Procedure.
- 3.6. We will deal with any complaints about the outcome of any ASB matters by explaining clearly the decision making process and signposting to the community trigger where appropriate. The community trigger is part of the Crime, Policing and ASB Act 2014 whereby any person can ask for an independent review of an ASB case where the criteria for review have been met.

4.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 4.1 All customers reporting ASB to whg will be treated equally and with respect. ASB is investigated impartially with a problem oriented solution based focus. We will not label anyone involved in a report of ASB as a 'victim' or 'perpetrator' of ASB unless evidence proves this to be the case.

5.0 TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION

- 5.1. Colleagues responding to ASB and our legal team receive relevant training in response to any changes in legislation or Government guidance.
- 5.2. All relevant colleagues dealing with ASB investigations will receive appropriate Anti Social Behaviour training at the commencement of their role and in response to any relevant changes in legislation.

6.0 MONITOR AND REVIEW

- 6.1 This Policy will be monitored by the Director of Housing and reviewed every three years by the Policy Group and approved by the Customer Experience Committee.

7.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 7.1 Documents, policies and procedures associated with this Policy are:
 - Acceptable Behaviour Policy
 - Domestic Abuse Customer Policy
 - Domestic Abuse Colleague Policy
 - Hate Crime Policy
 - CCTV policy
 - Tenancy Management Policy
 - Allocations Policy
 - Restricted Access To Housing Policy

- The Crime, Policing and ASB Act 2014
- Reform of anti-social behaviour powers - Statutory guidance for frontline professionals – Home Office, July 2014
- Empowering Communities, Protecting Victims. Summary report on the Community Trigger trials - Home Office, 2013
- Putting Victims First. More Effective Responses to Anti-Social Behaviour Home Office, 2012
- The Social Housing White Paper 2020
- Data Protection Policy
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Safeguarding Policy

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