



Our vision is
"to deliver excellent Housing Services"

Anti – Social Behaviour Policy

Newark and Sherwood Homes Limited



RESPECT
STANDARD
FOR HOUSING
MANAGEMENT

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1 Introduction

Newark and Sherwood Homes is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) set up with effect from 1 November 2004 to manage, maintain and improve Council housing on behalf of Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC).

Newark and Sherwood Homes undertakes the main housing management functions such as letting homes, repairs and maintenance, rent collection and estate management of around 5,500 Council homes in Newark and Sherwood. NSDC remains the landlord. Newark and Sherwood Homes also delivers services to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

This Anti-Social Behaviour policy is one of many implemented in line with our vision "to deliver excellent Housing Services" and is further supported by the core values which underpin the work we do: -

- Customer First
- Valuing Everyone
- Delivering Excellence
- Making Positive Improvements
- Sharing Information

The promises captured in this policy are supplemented by a number of Newark and Sherwood Homes strategies, policies and service standards:-

- Access and Customer Care Strategy
- Equalities & Diversity Strategy
- Domestic Violence Policy
- Anti – Harassment Policy
- Anti – Social Behaviour Service Standard

All of which can be accessed by contacting The Customer Access Team on 0845 258 5550 and via our website www.nshomes.co.uk

There are five main drivers behind this policy:

- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, which gave both landlords and the Police increased powers and tools to tackle Anti-Social behaviour.
- The Government's RESPECT Agenda, launched in January 2006. Respect is about central government, local agencies, local communities and ultimately every citizen working together to build a society in which we can respect one another – where anti-social behaviour is rare and tackled effectively, and communities can live in peace together. Newark and Sherwood Homes signed up to the Respect Standard for Housing Management (RSHM) in October 2006. We will deliver respect through our housing management role and broader involvement in estate management.

- The Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities”, published in October 2006. This brings more freedom and power for local government and local people to shape their own communities. In addition it reduces national targets whilst strengthening local accountability and puts in place new measures to ensure local services are more responsive to their communities
- The Governments Sustainable Communities Agenda. Sustainability is about living and developing in ways which:
 - promote economic vitality and employment
 - meet social needs
 - provide a high quality local environment
 - use natural resources prudently and protect the wider environment effectively
- A commitment from Newark and Sherwood Homes to ensure that the minority who do engage in nuisance and anti-social behaviour are dealt with in a swift and proportionate manner.

1.1 Policy Statement

Newark and Sherwood Homes aims to deliver the best possible service for tenants and leaseholders who are experiencing anti-social behaviour.

Newark and Sherwood Homes is committed to ensuring that all tenants, leaseholders and residents living in the district enjoy a quality of life that is not blighted by the small minority of people who fail to recognise their obligations as neighbours and members of the community.

Newark and Sherwood Homes recognises that tackling anti-social behaviour is fundamental to building and sustaining cohesive communities. This policy sets out how Newark and Sherwood Homes will work towards the creation of safe and strong communities.

1.2 Policy Objectives

Newark and Sherwood Homes will: -

- Prevent anti-social behaviour by ensuring all new and existing tenants and leaseholders are aware of their rights, responsibilities and obligations under the Tenancy Agreement/Leases
- To enforce the Tenancy Agreement/Lease by taking all necessary steps, including prevention measures and where necessary legal action against perpetrators of anti-social behaviour to ensure compliance
- To work with perpetrators who wish to amend their behaviour in order to sustain their tenancy/lease
- To offer effective support to victims of ASB
- Consider each case on an individual basis

- Ensure that access to services is available to all sections of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.
- Adopt a partnership approach to problem solving and achieving all the objectives listed, this may involve taking action against non – tenants using the powers available under the ASB Act 2003.
- Reduce and prevent behaviour which is likely to affect a person’s quality of life.

2. Anti-Social Behaviour

Newark and Sherwood Homes has adopted the following definition of Anti-Social Behaviour: -

“acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the defendant”

(Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

Anti-social behaviour can cover a wide range of behaviour from noise nuisance to serious harassment. Some examples could be:

- Nuisance caused by dogs
- Nuisance caused by children and/or young people
- Serious and/or persistent noise problems
- Verbal abuse
- Violent and criminal behaviour
- Intimidation and harassment
- Drug dealing
- Drink related nuisance
- People mowing their lawns at unreasonable hours
- People vacuuming at unreasonable hours
- People walking across a wooden floor whilst wearing shoes
- Children not playing within the locality and boundaries of their home

This list is not exhaustive.

3. The Scope of the Policy

The policy covers the work of Newark and Sherwood Homes staff and in particular the Tenancy & Estate Team.

This team is responsible for:

- Proactively tackling anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime in partnership with the Police as part of the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership
- Ensuring that the conditions of tenancy are maintained and that those who fail to do so are dealt with in a timely and proportionate manner
- Housing Officers work with their local communities as part of Safer Neighbourhood Groups (SNG). These are groups whose role is to identify and attempt to resolve local community safety problems which are raised at SNG meetings by representatives from the local community. These meetings bring together local County and District Councillors, Housing Officers, and representatives from existing local groups, including: Parish Councils, Tenants and Residents Associations, Neighbourhood Watch, local voluntary groups and young people.
- Resident Involvement, engagement and consultation in line with the Resident Involvement Strategy and Tenant Compact. Working with local groups, where necessary, to identify areas where nuisance and anti-social behaviour are effecting quality of life and working with these groups to deliver customer led solutions to local issues in the form of estate agreements
- Working with tenants and leaseholders to improve the area in which they live by “designing out crime” through the delivery of environmental improvements and support from the Police
- Working in partnership with Newark and Sherwood District Council’s Anti-Social Behaviour Team, tenants and leaseholders to gather evidence and take action against people causing nuisance and anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods
- Working with tenants, leaseholders and partners to develop and deliver community initiatives which will reduce instances of nuisance and anti-social behaviour

This policy applies to:

- Tenants
- Leaseholders
- Other service users
- Other people who may interface with Newark and Sherwood Homes

This list is definitive yet not exhaustive

Newark and Sherwood Homes has policies in place for dealing with incidents of harassment; Anti – Harassment Policy and Domestic Violence; Domestic Violence

Policy. Both these policies can be accessed via www.nshomes.co.uk or by ringing the Customer Access Team on 0845 2585550.

4. Partnership Working

Newark and Sherwood Homes recognise that our success in delivering this policy and making a real difference in our neighbourhoods is dependent upon our ability to create positive working relationships with key partners. We need to build lasting partnerships which will ensure we are all fully committed to creating sustainable and cohesive communities where people are proud to live.

Newark and Sherwood Homes is a member of Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership, which works with other agencies including Newark Primary Care Trust, Children and Young People Services, Fire and Rescue Service, Victim Support, Environmental Health Team, Newark Probation Service and Nottinghamshire Police.

The overarching aim of Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership for Anti- Social Behaviour is **'To improve public perception about the area'**

The Community Safety Partnership has a number of ASB targets for the next 3 years:-

- 5% improvement on the IPSOS/MORI survey ratings
- 15% reduction in the number of criminal damage cases
- To work toward a countywide target of 20% reduction in deliberate secondary fires

The objectives being: -

- To improve satisfaction levels in the most vulnerable groups
- To reduce the number of non-crime incidents of vehicle nuisance in targeted areas
- To reduce the number of criminal damage incidents in targeted areas
- To improve levels of behaviour of identified groups in targeted areas

Newark and Sherwood Homes takes a proactive approach to tackling anti-social behaviour and offers, at an early stage, mediation services. We have a partnership agreement with Mansfield Mediation Ltd.

4.1 Supporting the Victim

Newark and Sherwood Homes acknowledges that support for the victims of anti-social behaviour is paramount and offers a variety of ways in which this support and assistance can be offered: -

- Referral to Mediation service
- Dairy Sheets
- Dictaphones for incident logging
- Action Planning with a designated housing officer
- Regular and mutually agreed feedback mechanisms
- Noise monitoring equipment installation
- Referral to Victim Support service
- Temporary or permanent re-housing (where appropriate)
- Accompanied court visits and a pre familiarisation visit where required

In all cases Newark and Sherwood Homes' officers will work and agree with the victim as to which services, if any, they require.

Victim support is the national charity that helps people who are affected by crime and ASB. Victims of ASB are affected in different ways, emotional and physical or both.

The service provided by Victim Support is free and confidential. For Nottinghamshire victim support please ring 01909 500455 or visit www.victimsupport.org.uk.

5. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

Newark and Sherwood Homes will consider all options when investigating allegations of anti-social behaviour.

There are a variety of tools available to tackle anti-social behaviour, both informal and formal.

Newark and Sherwood Homes staff make use of the following: -

Informal Remedies

- Warning notices
- Multi-agency caution letters
- Mediation
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- Intensive management/support
- Referral to external support agencies for both the victim and perpetrator
- Implementation of estate agreements
- Regular inspection of estates throughout the district

Formal Remedies

- Injunctions
- Termination of Introductory Tenancies
- Demotion of Secure Tenancies
- Possession proceedings
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (both criminal and civil)

In cases where vulnerability is an issue for either the victim or perpetrator, we will adopt a multi-agency approach in order to deliver the best possible service to all involved. We will involve case workers from the relevant agencies and in certain circumstances call a multi-agency case conference to discuss the way forward to resolve the anti-social behaviour.

6. Service Provision

What you can expect from Newark and Sherwood Homes;

- We will arrange for you to speak to a member of staff in private and in a safe environment
- We will be honest and realistic about the services Newark and Sherwood Homes can provide.
- We will work with you to establish what your needs are and respect that no action may be requested.
- We will be supportive but let any decisions be your own.
- We will explain what support services are available and provide contact numbers and names where possible.
- Where a decision is made to report the incident to the police we will again offer support, and attend the initial meeting if required and if possible.
- We will have staff that is adequately trained to deal with anti-social behaviour
- We will assign a housing officer
- We will make use of professional witnesses where appropriate. .

7. Monitoring

Newark and Sherwood Homes staff will record all incidents of anti-social behaviour in line with standard reporting procedures.

We will monitor our service delivery on a monthly basis in the following areas:

- Record the number of new anti-social behaviour cases
- Record the number of anti-social behaviour cases closed
- Record the number of cases referred for mediation

- Record the number of warning notices issued
- Record the number of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- Record the number of possession proceedings undertaken
- Record the number of injunctions
- Record the number of evictions
- Record the number of multi –agency meetings attended relating to ASB and crime prevention
- Report on customer satisfaction with the estate management service

7.1 Evaluation

We will measure the success of our service by:

Theme	Measure of Success
Use of informal and non legal remedies	Reduction in possession proceedings undertaken Reduction in evictions Number of ASB cases closed Record number of cases referred to mediation Compliance of acceptable behaviour contracts
Safer Neighbourhood Groups	Increased satisfaction with neighbourhoods, working towards a target of 87% - an increase of 3% Reduction in perceived levels of crime Increase perception of feeling safe in their home Reduction in number of ASB cases recorded Confidence in communities that anti-social behaviour will be dealt with swiftly and proportionately

Resident Involvement	<p>Increased Satisfaction with opportunities to influence decisions, working towards a target of 90% by March 2010 – an increase of 12%.</p> <p>Increased attendance at Safer Neighbourhood Groups</p> <p>Establishment of estate agreements – to have 2 agreements established by June 2009</p>
Effective Partnership Working	<p>Record the number of multi –agency meetings attended relating to ASB and crime prevention , a commitment to attend at least 10 per year.</p> <p>Reduction in incidences of ASB and nuisance</p> <p>Consistent approach district wide</p> <p>Increased satisfaction with neighbourhoods working towards a target of 87% - an increase of 3%</p>

8. Policy Review

The Customer Services Director (or designated other) will instigate the review of this policy on a three yearly basis, and any associated documents.

An additional review process may be required following: -

- New legislation
- Emerging best practice
- Case law affecting the rights of victims and/or perpetrators
- Day to day operational issues

Any review which takes place will be done in conjunction with partners to ensure compatibility with existing strategies and service development.

This policy has been subject to an equality impact assessment which is available at www.nshomes.co.uk or by contacting Newark and Sherwood Homes on 0845 2585550 or Mrs J Davidson; details in section 9.

9. Comments on the Policy or Service

If you wish to comment on this Policy or the service you should do so in the first instance by writing to: -

The Estates Manager – Mrs J Davidson
Newark and Sherwood Homes
Kelham Hall
Newark-on-Trent
Notts
NG23 5QX

Or by making any comments/complaints through the ‘Housing Matters or Complaints Matter’ procedure, you can do this by completing the necessary form, emailing us at housing@nshomes.co.uk or visiting our website at www.nshomes.co.uk. The issues raised will then be investigated and a reply sent in writing.

Newark and Sherwood Homes Limited
Kelham Hall
Kelham
NEWARK ON TRENT
Nottinghamshire
NG23 5QX

If you would like this document in another language or format, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us.



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