



NCCHSP175 Good Neighbour Policy

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Good Neighbour Policy

Policy statement

Nottingham City Council Housing Services (NCCHS) is committed to supporting our residents, to feel safe and happy in their homes, by making sure that the communities where they live are safe and welcoming. Our aim is to foster good relations and to raise awareness, understanding and compromise between our residents.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a term that relates to a wide range of behaviours.

Legislation describes housing related ASB as being behaviour that is causing or likely to cause nuisance or annoyance. This is a low threshold and there will be behaviours that are causing someone a nuisance but that would not be reasonable or appropriate to categorise as ASB. These are behaviours, however, that can still cause a great deal of upset and frustration, creating tensions between neighbours and wider communities.

Where the behaviour is not ASB, and therefore unlikely to be a tenancy breach, it requires a different response from us, the landlord.

We will not seek to label someone as a perpetrator, nor will we be likely to consider any of our legal tools that are available to use in ASB cases. We do, however, wish to foster good relations between our residents. While we may be limited in our responses, this policy is designed to set out how we may be able to assist.

The deciding factor of whether a person's behaviour falls under the Good Neighbour Management Policy or the ASB Policy is whether the behaviour is considered to cause annoyance, alarm or distress. Where there is no deliberate intention, the incident will be handled through the Good Neighbour Policy. Where it is considered that there is likely s deliberate intent, the incident will be handled through the ASB Policy.

We recognise that reported behaviour can change in terms of severity and that something initially assessed as falling under the Good Neighbour Policy can evolve into ASB. We will continually reassess our cases each time a report is received, making sure that all cases are correctly handled under the correct policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all Nottingham City Council tenants, leaseholders, household members, and visitors, and to residents of other tenures where issues relate to Nottingham City Council properties or land.

Legislation

This policy has been written to take into consideration the following legislation:

- Housing Acts 1985 & 1996
- ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Housing Act 2004
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Equality Act 2010
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998

And the following policies:

- Pets Policy
- ASB and Hate Crime Policy
- Vulnerability Policy

- Tree Policy

Policy principles

Our approach to Good Neighbour Management is underpinned by the following principles, aligned with our ASB and Hate Incident Policy:

1. We will triage and assess all reports of ASB that are made to us using a range of factors. These factors may include the severity of the behaviour, its frequency, duration, times it is occurring, intention and impact. Assessing these factors allow us to decide whether the report meets our definition of ASB. Where it does not, we will be made clear to the reporter at the earliest possible opportunity why this decision has been made and which policy the matter will be managed under.
2. We recognise that reported behaviour can change in terms of severity and that something initially assessed as being a 'good neighbour engagement' issue can evolve into ASB. We will continue to reassess our decision in a case each time a report is received, making sure we do not miss an opportunity to intervene.
3. Because the purpose of this policy is to develop and strengthen relationships between people who live near to each other, we need the cooperation and support from the parties involved to improve situations. Where parties refuse to a reasonable request, we may not be able to assist any further. Where this is the case, it will be clearly communicated to the party concerned.
4. The purpose of this policy is not to find fault or blame. We are extremely unlikely to consider legal actions as a response to our involvement in matters that we are dealing with under this policy.
5. At all stages we will consider the support needs of the parties involved in a matter dealt with under this policy. We recognise that sometimes personal circumstances may affect a person's tolerance, perception or ability to cope with certain situations. When we recognise that this could be contributory factor, we will work to identify suitable referrals and support.
6. We may not always be able to assist with a situation that is dealt with under this policy as a single agency. There will be times where we may work with our partner agencies to share information and identify the best possible support and guidance we can offer to parties.

Building safe and inclusive communities

We're committed to creating safe, clean, and sustainable neighbourhoods where residents from all backgrounds live together in mutual respect and cooperation. This supports Nottingham City Council's vision for creating a flourishing, inclusive and sustainable city where residents thrive.

Customer engagement and responsiveness

We will respond promptly and effectively to tenant and leaseholder concerns, making sure neighbourhoods remain places of quiet enjoyment and community pride, in line with the Regulator of Social Housing's Neighbourhood and Community Standard.

Partnership for safety and wellbeing

We will work collaboratively with other Nottingham City Council services, the police, health services, housing providers, and other agencies to promote social, environmental, and economic wellbeing.

Tenancy sign-up and responsibilities

At the start of each tenancy, we will clearly explain tenant rights and responsibilities, including rent obligations, property care, mutual respect, and compliance with policies such as pets and noise. This mirrors our approach to tenancy management and good neighbour principles. From time to time, we will require access to NCC tenant's property for reasons such as to inspect and then carry out any works to discharge our repair and improvement obligations.

Reporting issues and referrals

Residents can report neighbourhood concerns through our customer service channels. If a Nottingham City Council Housing Services tenant or leaseholder is experiencing an issue identified above, we ask that they let us know by:

- Calling us on 0115 746 9555
- emailing reportasb@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
- texting the word REPORTASB followed by their name, address and message to 80800

If the incident involves a crime, it should be reported to the police. In an emergency (property or life is at risk), by dialling 999.

For non-emergencies, dialling 101 or reporting online to Crimestoppers and Nottinghamshire Police, and afterwards calling us on 0115 746 9555 to let us know they've done that.

Behaviours that we wouldn't normally class as ASB

The definition of ASB is subjective based on how it makes someone feel.

We recognise, however, that every individual person has different tolerances, expectations and perceptions when deciding what behaviour is or is not appropriate.

This means that some people will see certain behaviour as 'anti-social', however, they are not unreasonable. We do not consider these types of behaviour to be ASB.

These include behaviours that may be frustrating but are not unreasonable such as:

- General household noise (footsteps, doors closing, washing machines, babies crying).
- Minor gardening concerns, such as slightly overgrown grass or untidy but non-hazardous gardens, hedges not maintained, rubbish left in gardens.
- Noise transference due to building construction.
- General household noise within high-rise and medium rise flats
- Cooking smells
- Parking disputes where no designated bays or legal breaches exist.
- Lifestyle differences (cleanliness, routines, cultural practices).
- DIY within reasonable hours.
- Pet disturbance that does not meet nuisance thresholds.
- Personal disagreements, rumours
- Retrieval of lost balls.

As the issues meeting the definition of this Policy are unlikely to involve breaches of tenancy agreement and/or causing ASB, our response is very unlikely to include taking legal actions.

Triage and assessment

Complaints

All reports will be assessed by a Housing Patch Manager To help us decide whether a report should be dealt with under this policy, we will consider the following factors.

We will consider:

- Whether behaviour is deliberate
- Frequency, duration, and timing
- Impact on Resident 1
- Structural or environmental factors (e.g. thin walls)
- Any safeguarding concerns
- Vulnerability or support needs of any party
- Impact on the wider community

If the behaviour is not considered to be ASB, we will explain this clearly and manage the report under this policy. There may also be issues that we do not manage under this policy. In some cases, another service of the Council may be better placed to respond, and we will signpost those issues to the relevant teams. You have a right to ask for a review by a senior housing manager if you do not agree with this decision

Where an issue initially meets Good Neighbour criteria but later worsens, we will reassess and transfer to the ASB policy if appropriate.

We will contact you within five working days to confirm which policy the case will be managed.

Support and safeguarding

We recognise that wellbeing, disability, trauma, mental health, or personal stressors may influence how residents experience neighbourhood issues.

Where appropriate we may:

- Discuss support needs sensitively
- Refer to tenancy sustainment, mental health services, adult/children's social care, domestic abuse services, or third-sector organisations
- Request consent to share information
- Make safeguarding referrals where risk of harm is identified (consent sought where possible)
- Align our approach to our Vulnerability Policy

Failure to provide consent for information sharing may limit the support we can offer.

Possible responses and assistance

Our focus in these matters is to help to raise awareness, understanding and compromise between residents, with the overall aim of improving relationships.

Responses may include:

1. Self-resolution support

Providing advice to Resident 1 on how to approach Resident 2 safely and constructively.

2. Informal contact

With agreement, we may contact Resident 2 to raise awareness of the issue.

3. Mediation

Mediation is an early intervention which helps all parties foster a better understanding of how behaviours can impact on others. Mediation is a voluntary process, and referrals can only be made where both parties agree.

4. Practical problem-solving, such as:

- Advice on reasonable adjustments
- Asking parties to make reasonable changes to activities as part of being a good neighbour.
- Agreeing shared expectations between neighbours

We will always take proportionate action and will not apply all options in every case.

When all reasonable options are exhausted, we will explain clearly when we cannot assist further.

Over time we will develop a menu of practical solutions to support this policy and assist HPMS in identifying appropriate solutions.

Confidentiality and information sharing

We cannot guarantee confidentiality where safeguarding or crime concerns arise.

The central purpose of this policy is to build relationships between parties and therefore it is very unlikely that we will be able to assist if the person making the report wishes to remain anonymous.

Anonymous reports may limit our ability to assist, and we will discuss limitations openly

Information will be shared only where legally permitted and necessary under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Data Protection Act 2018.

Case recording and data management

All Good Neighbour Management cases will be formally recorded on Housing Services systems. Notes will be accurate, timely, and chronologically ordered.

Persistent or unreasonable complainants

If a resident repeatedly raises issues already addressed and no new evidence exists, we may:

- Explore underlying support needs
- Signpost to wellbeing or advocacy services
- If necessary, follow the Serial and Unreasonably Persistent Complaint and Behaviour Policy

We will communicate clearly and empathetically before any restrictions are applied.

Staff reporting

Where staff observe behaviours of concern, irrespective of whether these meet the defined threshold for anti-social behaviour, such observations must be reported through the Eyes Wide Open process.

Monitoring and review

We will monitor:

- Volume and type of good neighbour management cases
- Outcomes and resolution rates
- Mediation uptake
- Resident satisfaction
- Trends or hotspots requiring targeted action.