



Neighbourhood Management Policy

Prepared By	Operations Manager
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Review Frequency	3 Years

1) Policy Aims

- 1.1 Family Housing Association (FHA) recognises that good Neighbourhood Management is an integral part in its role as a landlord and that well managed neighbourhoods provide a better quality of life for residents and can act as deterrent to anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance, and crime.
- 1.2 FHA is committed to providing excellent service, creating safe and sustainable communities, whereby people from all different backgrounds and groups can live side by side within a culture of co-operation and respect.
- 1.3 FHA will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard through partnership working with its tenants and other agencies as part of its commitment to keeping neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe and promoting pride in its neighbourhoods.
- 1.4 FHA is committed to working in partnership with relevant partners and external agencies, such as the local authority, police, and other housing providers, to help promote the social, environmental, economic and wellbeing of its neighbourhoods. FHA will work in partnership with relevant organisations and community safety partnerships, to deal with Neighbourhood Management Issues promptly and prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods in conjunction with the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

2. Triage

- 2.1 When someone reports an incident or behaviour, FHA will record the issue and assess the type of issue being complained of and triage it into the following categories and utilise the relevant policy to address it.

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Violent
- Threatening
- Abuse
- Offensive
- Crime
- Deliberate Nuisance
- Fly-tipping
- Damage To Property

Neighbourhood Management

- Lifestyle Issues that affect Neighbours
- Noise that is not considered Anti-Social Behaviour after a Noise Assessment
- Neighbour Disputes

Domestic Abuse

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional or Psychological
- Financial

Safeguarding

- Harm or risk of harm to children, young people, and vulnerable adults

Harassment & Hate Crime

- Incident perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate.

The above list is not exhaustive, and it is possible some incidents or behaviour need to be treated under multiple policies.

3. Prevention

3.1 Allocations / Lettings

We ensure references and identity checks are satisfactory and then carry out in-depth checks on the Property Pool Plus computer system to examine the applicant's history and any issues that it raises. If there is any history of Neighbourhood Management Issues, the applicant will be discussed with the Operations Manager as to whether it is appropriate to offer a tenancy. Where properties have had previous tenants with Neighbourhood Management Issues or Anti-Social Behaviour, we will carry out the lettings sensitively and be even more selective about who we allocate the property to.

3.2 Starter Tenancies

The Association uses Starter Tenancies in accordance with our Starter Tenancies Policy. They give us greater flexibility to offer new tenants an appropriate level of security during the early stages of their tenancy, which will later be enhanced if the tenant has not in the meantime breached the terms of the agreement. Tenants must satisfy us that they are able to abide by all conditions of tenancy, including those regarding acceptable standards of behaviour. It's very unlikely FHA would seek to end a Starter Tenancy or not convert to a full Assured based solely on Neighbourhood Management Issues. However, it's still a tool to use to help tenants modify behaviour if its impacting on others.

3.3 Tenancy Agreements

Tenancy agreements clearly set out Family Housing Association's expectations of the tenant in respect of fulfilling their responsibilities and behaving in a manner that does not have a negative effect on the quality of life of others.

3.4 Sign Up

At Sign up, FHA will impress upon new tenants their rights and responsibilities as detailed in the tenancy agreement and encourage them to develop positive relationships and adopt good neighbour principles.

3.5 Staff Presence

All blocks of flats with internal and external communal areas are visited at least once a month. All roads and properties are visited annually. All FHA properties are within 5 miles of the office so staff can easily visit properties quickly when Neighbourhood Management issues occur. Although FHA has a hybrid working policy, even when FHA staff are working from home, they are expected to treat it as though they at the office and visit tenants when required.

3.6 Publicity

We will generally publicise good practice or success stories on the website, in Newsletters or through social media. This builds confidence in Family Housing Association and shows we are acting on residents' concerns. It means residents are more likely to report Neighbourhood Management Issues.

4. Initial Reports

The Association will accept reports of Neighbourhood Management issues from any source including:

- via the telephone
- in writing
- through our website
- on an Incident Diary Sheet
- via email
- text message
- during an interview
- from an external agency such as Wirral Council
- Contact via our Out of Hours Service
- Through our social media pages

5. Risk Assessment Matrix

- 5.1 FHA will complete a Risk Assessment Matrix for Neighbourhood Management cases. The Risk Score will be used by the Investigating Officer to create an Action Plan to determine what support for the complainant may be required and how urgently referrals or contact needs to be made. The Risk Score may also determine that the case needs to be treated under different policies. FHA treats all Neighbourhood Management issues seriously and will take appropriate action to address issues that have been identified or reported. A harm centred approach will be followed ensuring that complainants have access to appropriate support services and feel able to work with FHA staff whilst Neighbourhood Management issues are explored.

6. Investigation

- 6.1 FHA will thoroughly explore all Neighbourhood Management issues raised and work with tenants, other residents, and partner agencies as appropriate to find a successful resolution. The Investigating Officer will collect evidence by:
- Interviewing complainants
 - Identifying and interviewing witnesses
 - Inspecting and photographing the cause of the Neighbourhood Management issue
 - Inspecting and collecting any visual or sound recording of the Neighbourhood Management issue
 - Witnessing the Neighbourhood Management issue if ongoing
 - Providing Incident Diaries for the complainant to complete
 - Encouraging the complainant to use sound or video recording equipment whilst abiding by data protection laws.
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 - Requesting information from other agencies / sources
 - Identifying and Interviewing Perpetrators
 - Establishing whether the complainant or perpetrator has any disabilities, vulnerabilities, or health problems that we need to take into account
 - Establish dates and times of incidents and record what happened in as much detail as possible.
 - Any complainants or witnesses will be asked how the Neighbourhood Management issue has affected them.

7. Assessment

- 7.1 Following investigation, the Investigating Officer will re-evaluate the type of Neighbourhood Management issue, the impact it is having on complainants and re-evaluate the risk score. The Association aims to be flexible in dealing with Neighbourhood Management issues.
- 7.2 The Investigating Officer will consider:
- Is there more than one witness?
 - How detailed and accurate are the witness statements
 - Can those statements be backed up by sound or video recording?
 - Do the perpetrator/s admit or deny the allegations?
 - Has the perpetrator made counter allegations?
 - Has a condition of tenancy been breached?
 - Is there more than one incident?
 - Have there been complaints about the perpetrator before?
 - Are there any disabilities or health problems that are a contributing factor in the Neighbourhood Management issue?
 - Are there any support services or agencies already involved with the complainant or perpetrators?
 - Are Wirral Council Environmental Health any other local authority department involved?

8. Action

8.1 FHA will consider all the options available when exploring Neighbourhood Management issues and will consider a range of informal and formal tools, some of which are delivered in partnership with other agencies, including:

- Phone calls, visits, letters, emails, text messages etc
- Provide advice, offer solutions, and carry out tunnel mediation between the parties
- Good Neighbour Agreement
- Parenting Agreement
- Mediation
- Restorative Justice
- Community Conferencing
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- Improve Sound Insulation
- Use Tenant Welfare Fund for other remedies.
- Referrals To/Engagement with Support Agencies
- Community Protection Warnings/Notices
- Community Events

8.2 During the process the Association will establish whether the perpetrator needs support, particularly where an underlying issue is a contributing factor in the Neighbourhood Management Issues. This could include but is not limited to:

- Drug & Alcohol Services
- Mental Health Support
- Children's Services
- Adult Social Services
- Ex Military Support Services

Support may already be in place, in which case we will engage with support services so that they can help, or if no support is in place, a referral can be made.

8.3 Throughout the process it is possible new information comes available or behaviour changes which means all or part of the case needs reclassifying and treating under different policies. If a tenant continues to cause Neighbourhood Management Issues despite FHA providing support, advice, and early interventions, it may be treated under our Anti-Social Behaviour policy.

9. Insufficient Evidence

- 9.1 In some reports of Neighbourhood Management Issues there may be insufficient evidence to prove what the complainant says is happening. Without evidence it is difficult to persuade or compel perpetrators to engage in the solutions offered. FHA will continue to give the complainant as many options as possible to collect evidence. FHA will continue to explore solutions that don't involve the perpetrator and make referrals or contact with support services for the complainant.

10. Re-Housing

- 10.1 The Association recognises that in some scenarios it is best to re-house complainants of Neighbourhood Management Issues. This may be appropriate when there is insufficient evidence to take action, the issue is having a serious detrimental effect on the complainant, or all other solutions have been exhausted.
- 10.2 Due to our limited size, it is likely that a suitable property will not be available in order to facilitate a transfer in which case we will write a supporting letter to Property Pool Plus to try and secure a transfer to another local Housing Association.

11. Closing Cases

- 11.1 We will work to resolve all reports of Neighbourhood Management Issues to the satisfaction of any complainants.

We will try to agree with any complainants when a case should be closed. This is usually done when there have been no further incidents for over four weeks and no further actions or meetings are required. Complainants are given opportunity to object to this if there have been further incidents or if they feel further action can be taken. Those objections will be carefully taken into account before any final decision is made.

Complainants are advised that just because a case is closed, it does not mean they cannot report further Neighbourhood Management Issues in future. The case can be re-opened again, and previous reports can be considered and take into account.

12. Training

- 12.1 FHA employees will be given appropriate training that covers the impact of and FHA's response to Neighbourhood Management Issues. Staff will be trained to recognise the difference between a Neighbourhood Management Issues, Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime & Harassment, Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding and how to respond to them appropriately.

13. Equality & Diversity

- 13.1 If a complainant/perpetrator's disability or mental health limits their capacity to understand, the Association will engage with or offer to refer the tenant to the appropriate support services.
- 13.2 If a complainant/perpetrator has none or limited ability to speak English, the Association will arrange a translation service and approach the local Multi Cultural Centre for support.

14. Data Protection

- 14.1 In order to carry out the Risk Assessment Matrix and assess whether support is required, the complainant/perpetrator may need to share personal and sensitive information. That information will only be used solely for that purpose. The information is stored on the Housing Management system. It will not be shared outside of the Association without the tenant's consent.

15. Monitoring and continuous improvement

- 15.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless legislation or regulatory standards require otherwise.