

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY	
Purpose	To provide a clear framework for staff members investigating complaints of anti-social behaviour (ASB) affecting residents, setting out our approach to supporting victims of ASB and dealing with the alleged perpetrators of ASB.
Applies to	Staff and Managers working for Harrison Housing and residents of almshouses managed by Harrison Housing, or on behalf of other almshouse charities.
Date first implemented	January 2025
Author	Housing Manager
Date first approved by Leadership Team	December 2024
Date first approved by Board of Trustees	December 2024
Review Frequency	Every three years (policy) unless a serious incident or legislative change requires an earlier review. Procedural documents will be reviewed and amended as needed by Housing Manager.
Service Area	Housing Management
Document Status: This is a controlled document. Any printed copies of this document are not controlled. As a controlled document, this document should not be saved onto local drives but always accessed from the Policy Library.	

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS (made prior to full policy revision)		
Amendment Date	Nature of Amendment	Revised by

VERSION HISTORY			
Revision Date	Version No.	Revised by	Approved by

CURRENT POLICY REVISION	
Date revised	November 2024
Revised by	Housing Manager
LT approval date	December 2024
Board of Trustees approval date	December 2024
Next revision due	December 2027

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy sets out Harrison Housing's position on and approach to addressing complaints of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in properties owned or managed by Harrison Housing.
- 1.2 Harrison Housing staff should read this document alongside the associated procedural documents, including standard forms.

2. Policy Principles

- 2.1 Anti-Social Behaviour is defined in the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 as conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person; conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises; or conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person. (Part 1, Section 2).
- 2.2 This legal definition is broad and will be open to interpretation based on individual experience and expectations. ASB can mean different things to different people. Harrison Housing has therefore developed a framework within which to operate to assess which behaviours are unacceptable or unreasonable in the context of housing provided mostly for older people of limited financial means.
- 2.3 We are committed to tackling ASB including hate incidents, harassment or other linked crimes, with early intervention and a proactive approach. Domestic abuse is covered in a separate policy, but any consequential ASB experienced in the locality of a property where a resident is affected by domestic abuse will also be investigated using the ASB policy. In responding to ASB complaints we will work with our statutory partners, including the local authority, and the relevant police force.
- 2.4 Hate crime will be investigated in line with this policy and will be treated as a high priority, working with our statutory partners.
- 2.5 ASB can constitute a wide variety of behaviours which may cause nuisance or annoyance to others. We expect residents to be reasonably tolerant of other people's lifestyles and will not accept reports of ASB which might reasonably be considered a part of everyday life. Although some behaviours may be considered unpleasant or inconsiderate, this does not necessarily constitute ASB. We will record such complaints in case of future escalation but will not at this stage investigate further.
- 2.6 Examples of behaviours that are commonly considered antisocial can be found outlined in Appendix 1 of this policy.

- 2.7 Our Letter of Appointment signed by all residents contains two clauses relating to acceptable behaviour:
- “Residents are asked to occupy the property quietly and with thought for the other residents.”
 - “The Trustees retain the power to ask a resident to vacate the accommodation in the case of serious misconduct or if there is a breach of the regulations.”

2.8 We understand that both complainants and alleged perpetrators may require support in the event of an ASB investigation and either party may be at risk due to vulnerability.

3. Implementation

- 3.1 All staff will be made aware of this policy through Harrison Housing’s internal communication channels, including email.
- 3.2 Changes to this policy and its associated procedure, if applicable, will be communicated to all staff.
- 3.3 All staff will be required to read this policy, and to confirm that they have read and understood it.
- 3.4 This policy will be published to residents through our website and Resident Engagement Forums.

4. Other Policies, Regulation and Legislation

- 4.1 This policy should be used in conjunction with the following policies and regulatory guidance:
- CCTV Policy
 - Complaints Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Domestic Abuse Policy
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Vexatious Complaints Policy
 - [Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014](#) and [Statutory Guidance](#) (updated March 2023)
 - [Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards Code of Practice April 2024](#) (Neighbourhood and Community Standard)

5. Responsibility

- 5.1 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that Harrison Housing has an appropriate Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy in place.
- 5.2 The Housing Manager will have operational responsibility for the implementation of this policy and ensuring that scheme-based staff based have adequate training and support to respond to complaints of ASB. The Housing Manager will provide general guidance to staff who are not scheme-based about responding to, logging and forwarding to the relevant colleague any complaints received about ASB.
- 5.3 The Housing Manager, in consultation with the CEO, will be responsible for deciding when to seek legal advice. With appropriate Trustee authorisation, the Housing Manager will be responsible for instructing solicitors on legal action.
- 5.4 The relevant Scheme Manager will usually be the first point of contact for a resident who wishes to complain about ASB, and the Scheme Manager will be responsible for making an initial investigation of the available facts. The Scheme Manager will be responsible for providing timely updates to the complainant and for alerting the Housing Manager to new cases or significant developments. Where a Scheme Manager has been providing cover for an absent colleague that colleague will be updated upon their return to work by the Scheme Manager who took the initial report.
- 5.5 All other Harrison Housing staff who may come into contact with residents, who monitor the info@harrisonhousing.org.uk mailbox or take incoming telephone calls will be responsible for logging basic information about potential ASB complaints and forwarding that information to the relevant Scheme Manager (or Housing Manager in the absence of a scheme manager).
- 5.6 The Housing Manager will provide an anonymised report of ASB cases under investigation as part of the regular Housing Management Report to the relevant Trustee Boards, usually quarterly.
- 5.7 All residents of Harrison Housing schemes, or schemes managed on behalf of other almshouse charities are responsible for complying with the terms of their licence agreement. They must not commit or allow the people living with them or visiting their home to commit acts of ASB.

6. Policy Detail

6.1 **Prevention** – We will ensure that residents are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to ASB from an early stage and will take other preventative measures including:

- Interview and sign-up processes.
- Resident newsletters and meetings.
- Early contact with new residents who may inadvertently cause nuisance.
- Routine day to day contact with residents as potential issues arise.
- Maintaining communal areas to a high standard.
- Proportionate use of CCTV.

6.2 **Early Intervention** – We will consider which course of action is suitable to the circumstances, the severity and/or persistent nature of the conduct and the proportionality and reasonableness of any action. In some situations, we may use more than one course of action to address the problem. Generally, in those cases which are not judged to be high priority or impact, use will be made of early intervention tools such as:

- Informal advice and support from the Scheme Manager to encourage good neighbourly conduct.
- Encouraging residents to communicate with each other and respect each other's point of view.
- Use of informal and formal mediation.
- Acceptable Behaviour Contract to be signed by the perpetrator.

6.3 **Escalation** – Where early intervention techniques have not been successful and the nuisance behaviour is continuing, where complainants need protection to prevent ASB incidents from occurring, or where a case is identified in the first instance as having a high priority or impact, the matter will be escalated. Harrison Housing will proceed to formal investigation, and where appropriate to enforcement action.

6.4 **Investigation** – Where informal action has been unsuccessful, or where the seriousness of a complaint justifies this, the case will move to formal investigation. The Scheme Manager will, insofar as possible, take the following steps (see Appendix A Procedure document for more detail):

6.4.1 Acknowledgement of initial report

6.4.2 Complainant Interview, followed by a written summary

6.4.3 Alleged Perpetrator Interview, followed by a written summary

6.4.4 Follow up actions including, for example, gathering information from potential witnesses, inspection of any damage reported, review of CCTV (following CCTV policy).

6.4.5 Logging any further incidents which are reported.

6.4.6 Liaison with external agencies such as Police Safer Neighbourhood Team or support services.

6.4.7 Regular updates to the Complainant (depending on nature of complaint but generally every 2 weeks).

6.4.8 Review of case with Housing Manager.

6.4.9 Decision on further informal or formal action, in agreement with Housing Manager, and where applicable with Trustee approval.

6.5 **Support** - Where the complainant or alleged perpetrator are believed to need support or are at risk, this will be addressed as a high priority by the Scheme Manager, with the consent of the resident concerned. This may include for example:

- Contact with next of kin, other family or friends.
- Contact with existing support service.
- Referral to appropriate external support service.
- Advice and support on contacting the police.
- Advice and support on contacting medical services.
- Safeguarding referral to the relevant local authority.
- Whilst we aim to resolve the ASB issue itself a complainant who wishes to make a transfer application will be supported to do so. We will advise of the likely timescale for an alternative property becoming available.

6.6 **Partnership Working** – it is a requirement of the Regulator of Social Housing’s Consumer Standard (Neighbourhood and Community) that:

“In order to deter and tackle ASB and hate incidents effectively in areas where they operate, registered providers must work with appropriate partners, with a common aim of trying to reduce ASB and hate incidents. Joint initiatives may include, for example, providing mediation services to try to resolve disputes before they escalate, undertaking security measures and environmental improvements, and providing diversionary activities”

Criminal matters will be referred to the relevant police force, and Harrison Housing will co-operate with any police investigation.

6.7 **Enforcement** – Harrison Housing has a graded approach to enforcement action. We will use a range of interventions depending on the nature of reports being made. Our approach will be reasonable and proportionate, and will include but is not limited to:

- Informal action including mediation and use of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract.
- Written Warnings
- Possession Proceedings

6.8 **Partnership working on enforcement** - Working with external authorities to put in place:

- Injunctions
- Criminal Behaviour Orders, Community Protection Notices, Closure Notices and Orders, all working in co-operation with the police.
- Prosecution, where we will co-operate with the police in the most serious cases such as assault, threats to life, arson etc.

7. **Complaints**

7.1 A complaint about Anti-Social Behaviour will be investigated under the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and follow the Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure. This does not apply to a complaint about the service provided by Harrison Housing.

7.2 Where a resident is dissatisfied with the way in which a complaint about Anti-Social Behaviour has been responded to, and has allowed reasonable time for us to carry out an investigation, they have recourse to the Harrison Housing Complaints Policy. Where a resident has exhausted stage 1 and stage 2 of our Complaints Policy, or has not received a timely response to their complaint, they may escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman.

8. **Monitoring**

8.1 The Housing Manager will provide an anonymised report of current ASB cases to the relevant Trustees as a part of the regular Housing Management report, usually on a quarterly basis.

8.2 The Housing Manager will review, annually, the effectiveness of the policy, and make recommendations to the Harrison Housing Trustees as to any proposed amendments to the main policy, including any equalities implications. The policy will be reviewed in any case at three yearly intervals

if no other amendments have been proposed in the meantime. That will consider any feedback from Trustees of the other almshouses that we provide a management service to.

- 8.3 The Procedure and working documents appended to it, will be kept under review by the Housing Manager in consultation with Scheme Managers.

9. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- 9.1 For Harrison Housing, diversity is about respecting people's individual differences and ensuring that all people that come into contact with us have access to the same high standards of behaviour and service.
- 9.2 We are committed to ensuring that no resident or team member will be treated less favourably because of any Protected Characteristics.
- 9.3 This policy will be made available in accessible formats where required, and we will welcome the involvement of authorised advocates acting on behalf of residents who need support in making a report of ASB. This will be done whilst respecting confidentiality and ensuring that we have the resident's informed consent to communicate with an advocate.
- 9.4 Where identified we will support both complainants and alleged perpetrators with communication needs e.g. through the use of an interpreter or assistive technology. We will consider access needs when scheduling interviews and make reasonable adjustments when selecting a location for an interview, or consider alternative methods such as an online meeting or telephone call.
- 9.5 The Housing Manager will provide an anonymised annual report to Trustees on the implementation of this policy and any enforcement actions taken. This report will consider any potential equalities implications in the way that the policy is operating, and where necessary make recommendations for amendment to the policy.

Appendix 1 – What is anti-social behaviour?

The following are examples of behaviours where a report of anti-social behaviour could be made by residents to Harrison Housing:

- Dog fouling, uncontrolled and noisy pets, inconsiderate or dangerous parking and abandoned cars;
- Noise nuisance at high levels or unreasonable hours;
- Environmental health issues such as rubbish dumping;
- Vandalism and graffiti;
- Drug misuse, alcohol-related nuisance and prostitution;
- Hate incidents motivated by someone's protected characteristics;
- Harassment, including verbal and physical abuse and threats;
- Acts of violence.

If threats of violence or any other possible criminal activity are being experienced, residents should also report this to the police.