

## **Anti-social Behaviour Policy**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This document sets out Bracknell Forest Homes' approach to tackling anti-social behaviour. The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 defines anti-social behaviour as conduct which is *'capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person and which directly or indirectly relates to, or affects, the housing management functions of the landlord.'*
- 1.2 There are separate policies and procedures covering harassment and domestic abuse. These documents are closely linked and should be read in conjunction with each other.
- 1.3 Our categories of anti-social behaviour and timescales for response are given in Appendix 1.

### **2. Policy Statement**

- 2.1 Bracknell Forest Homes recognises our customers' right to live in a peaceful and safe environment. Where this environment is affected negatively by the behaviour of others, whether by a Bracknell Forest Homes' customer or someone else, we will intervene and work with our partners to bring an end to such behaviour.
- 2.2 This policy seeks to protect tenants, leaseholders, shared owners and freeholders as well as other members of the local community including businesses, Bracknell Forest Homes' staff and contractors.
- 2.3 Bracknell Forest Homes' tenancy and lease agreements include clauses that require residents not to commit ASB. Individuals named on agreements are responsible for the actions of other members of their household including children, visitors, lodgers and pets.
- 2.4 Bracknell Forest Homes is signed up to the Respect Standard. (See Section 6: Further information and Support for details).
- 2.5 Bracknell Forest Homes will take action against persons causing anti-social behaviour regardless of their tenure. This includes circumstances where our customers are causing nuisance to the wider community including owner-occupiers. Where leaseholders or shared owners are involved, action is taken in accordance with the terms of the lease.

### **3. Our aims**

3.1 Bracknell Forest Homes is committed to providing a high quality response to reports of ASB, through:

- Offering customers access to trained staff and a variety of ways to report ASB, including phone, in writing, by email, online and in person.
- Publicising our approach and responses to ASB
- Providing realistic and accurate advice about what we can do, and what the reporting individual can do, to prevent or address the ASB
- Monitoring reports of ASB, and using the data to identify repeat or persistent perpetrators
- Making sure that no preferential treatment is offered, and that nobody is disadvantaged, on the basis of factors such as their race, colour, ethnic and national origin, nationality, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital status, health status or age
- Offering information about services in a range of languages and formats, ensuring that interpreting and translation services are easily accessible
- Working with residents and communities to offer local standards that are tailored to preventing and tackling ASB in specific areas
- Using the available tools to take accelerated possession action against Bracknell Forest Homes' customers on Starter Tenancy or Assured Shorthold agreements
- Effectively managing information sharing protocols with all relevant partners for the purposes of preventing or tackling anti-social behaviour in line with the Data Protection Act.

### **4. What we will do**

4.1 When we become aware of ASB we will:

- Listen, and carry out an impartial investigation.
- Take a victim centered approach, offering confidential support and advice.
- Offer clear timescales and agree action plans and contact arrangements.
- Use a combination of preventative, diversionary, formal and informal actions to address ASB and its causes.
- Consider all available tools to best manage the anti-social behaviour, and take early and effective action against perpetrators when they fail to engage or amend their negative behaviours.
- Offer support, where appropriate, to any involved party.
- Work proactively in partnership with other agencies to achieve a coordinated response.

- Monitor satisfaction levels and the feedback of those who have reported ASB to Bracknell Forest Homes to continuously improve our service offering.
- Empower and encourage residents to resolve their own differences using a variety of methods including mediation.
- Maintain a cautionary contact register to minimise the risk to our staff and contractors responsible for site or home visits.
- Where our investigation suggests that the victim has misled us and is making exaggerated or malicious complaints, we will close the case, and may consider taking a counter action against them.

## **5.0 Customer responsibilities**

5.1 Bracknell Forest Homes expects tenants, leaseholders, members of their households and visitors to abide by certain responsibilities, namely to:

- treat others with respect, and act in a responsible and appropriate manner
- work with Bracknell Forest Homes to achieve the best available outcome
- provide evidence in support of allegations of anti-social behaviour, where appropriate, including diary sheets
- ensure that any pets living at or visiting the property are prevented from causing a nuisance.

5.2 There are some circumstances in which Bracknell Forest Homes will not get involved:

- personal arguments or disputes
- non-housing matters.

## **6. Related policies**

6.1 This policy should be considered in conjunction with the following other Bracknell Forest Homes policies:

- Harassment and Hate Crime.
- Domestic Abuse.
- Information sharing, data protection and confidentiality.

## **7. Further Information and Support**

Web link to the 'Respect: ASB Charter for Housing' –  
<http://www.cih.org/respectcharter>

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
Respect Line – Bracknell Forest Homes' 24-hour support line	0800 075 6699
Citizens advice bureau	0844 499 4107
Victim Support	victimsupport.org.uk 01344 411 411
Women's Aid – (National 24 hour free phone helpline)	0808 2000 247
Respect (National helpline)	0845 122 8609
Reunite (Advice for parents whose children have been abducted or for parents who fear abduction)	0116 255 6234
Thames Valley Police	999 or 101

## Appendix 1

### Categories, Lead Officers and Timescales for responding to ASB

<b>Category A</b>		
<b>Types of ASB</b>	<b>Lead Case Officer</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment / intimidation / threats</li> <li>• Physical Violence</li> <li>• Criminal behaviour / Crime</li> <li>• Domestic abuse</li> <li>• Hate related incidents</li> <li>• Prostitution / sexual acts / kerb crawling</li> </ul>	Senior Neighbourhood Services Officer	Initial contact with a person managing the case within one working day

<b>Category B</b>		
<b>Types of ASB</b>	<b>Lead Case Officer</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise nuisance</li> <li>• Verbal [Abuse]</li> <li>• Alcohol related</li> <li>• Drugs / substance misuse / drug dealing</li> <li>• Garden nuisance</li> <li>• Litter / rubbish / fly-tipping</li> <li>• Misuse of communal areas or loitering</li> <li>• Nuisance from vehicles</li> <li>• Pets and animal nuisance</li> <li>• Vandalism and damage to property</li> </ul>	Neighbourhood Services Officer	Initial contact with a person managing the case within three working days

**DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET**

<b>OWNER</b>	<b>Head of Housing Operations</b>
<b>STATUS</b> (DRAFT / APPROVED & LIVE / ARCHIVED)	<b>Approved &amp; Live</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Shared Drive://All Users/Library</b>
<b>IMPORTANT NOTICE:</b> <b>PRINTED PAPER COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT ARE <u>UNCONTROLLED</u>.</b> <b>THE CURRENT VERSION OF THIS POLICY IS AVAILABLE</b> <b>IN THE LIBRARY ON THE SHARED DRIVE.</b>	

<b>VERSION NUMBER</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>DATE AMENDED</b>	<b>CONSULTATION DATE</b>	<b>DATE APPROVED</b>	<b>APPROVED BY</b>	<b>REVIEW DATE</b>
1	K Barrett		Sep 07	Oct 07	Board	Aug 09
2	W Hainsworth	09/09	07,08,09/09 CIG 10/09 TLP	29/10/10	Board	Feb 12
2.1	J Thompson	02/13	N/A	02/13	n/a	Dec 13
3.	A McDonald	04/14	03/14 ASB CIG 04/14 TLP	11/11/14	EMT	Sept 17

<b>VERSION REFERENCE</b>	<b>SUMMARY OF CHANGES</b>
2	Separation of ASB and harassment policy. Full compliance with ASB act and aiming to meet Respect standard. Part of overall service review.
2.1	Fit for purpose. Updated in line with doc control.
3	Simplification of policy. No of ASB categories reduced to 2.