

APPENDIX 1

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Newark and Sherwood District Council

Good Neighbourhood Management Policy
2025 - 2028

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1. Introduction

1.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council is dedicated to delivering excellent customer service, ensuring that every interaction with us results in a positive experience.

In line with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, The Regulator of Social Housing requires all registered housing providers to publish a policy which outlines how, in consultation with tenants and leaseholders, the Council will work to maintain and enhance the neighbourhoods surrounding their homes.

1.2 The Council is committed to maintaining safe, clean, and attractive neighbourhoods where local people and communities can live, work, and thrive. The tenancy agreements for council tenants and leases for leaseholders clearly outline the responsibilities and expectations of all parties involved.

Effective neighbourhood management is essential to achieving these goals. It reflects our proactive approach to fostering positive relationships between neighbours in our estates, blocks, and street properties across the district. Good management not only enhances the quality of life for all residents but also helps to prevent issues such as anti-social behaviour, neighbour disputes, and crime.

1.3 This policy outlines the support tenants, leaseholders, and residents can expect when dealing with issues involving neighbours. It describes how the Council's Housing Services Team will approach and resolve complaints related to nuisance or disruption.

The Council's internal neighbourhood management procedure details the steps taken to address such reports and work towards a resolution, ensuring that all parties involved are treated fairly and with respect.

1.4 The Good Neighbourhood Management Policy states what tenants and leaseholders can expect:

- Good management of council housing neighbourhoods and shared areas.
- Continued building of strong working relations with our partnership agencies to maintain safe, clean, and attractive neighbourhoods.
- A fair and transparent assessment of reports of noise nuisance and adopting the most effective course of action.
- A proactive approach to the reported problem.
- A commitment to listen, understand, and communicate promptly and transparently with all parties.
- A preventative approach in housing allocations to avoid repeat situations where lifestyle and/or structural nuisance is a known issue.
- A commitment to continually improve the way we deliver services to our customers.

2. Aims of the Policy

2.1 This policy aims to ensure that tenants, leaseholders, and residents can enjoy their homes in a quiet, safe, clean, and secure environment.

2.2 The policy seeks to foster and strengthen positive relationships between neighbouring residents of all tenures. Cooperation and support from all parties is essential to improving situations. If any party refuses a reasonable request, we may be unable to provide further assistance. In such cases, this will be clearly communicated to all parties involved.

2.3 The goal of this policy is to engage, explain, and encourage before any type of enforcement, to facilitate understanding and resolution, and not to assign fault or place blame.

2.4 Issues addressed under this policy are often the result of circumstances rather than an intent to cause harm. Our aim is to raise awareness, promote understanding, and encourage compromise.

3. Good Neighbourhood Management

3.1 When new tenants move into a Council home a welcome pack is provided which includes a tenancy agreement, an outline of tenant rights and responsibilities, and 'How to Be a Good Neighbour' guidance to help create a positive and respectful community for everyone.

3.2 The Council encourages tenants to build positive relationships with their neighbours by following good neighbour principles. To support this, the Council:

- Run quarterly Community Link Group meetings across the district facilitated by the Tenancy Team for tenants to meet with council officers informally.
- Expect all employees to adopt a 'don't walk ethos' and to be the eyes and ears across within our neighbourhoods.
- Employ Tenancy Teams to manage tenancies, encourage sustainment, and facilitate involvement.

3.3 To support maintaining safe, clean, and attractive neighbourhoods the Council:

- Monitor our estates and neighbourhoods regularly.
- Proactively engage and encourage tenants to live in a neighbourly way.
- Have exceptional working relationships with partner organisations to resolve problems.
- Inspect Council grounds, neighbourhoods, community centres and blocks, reporting defects and areas of concern for remedial action.
- Run tenant inspection and scrutiny programmes for gardens, grounds and communal cleaning areas.
- Hold at least annual estate and neighbourhood Walkabouts with NSDC tenants, residents, members and local partners.
- Run schemes such as the Garden Scheme; Tree Scheme; Estate Improvement Scheme; proactive Additional Tenancy Support Assistance; noise monitoring, hoarding panel, community hubs, targeted support for people who are struggling to maintain a

tenancy; and a variety of grant schemes available to enhance neighbourhoods.

4. Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour

4.1 Some behaviours, while frustrating and upsetting to residents, may create tension between neighbours and the wider community without necessarily being classified as Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). When the behaviour does not meet the criteria for ASB and is unlikely to be a tenancy breach, it requires a different, more tailored approach.

4.2 Anti-social behaviour is a broad term that encompasses a range of actions. Legislation defines housing-related ASB as behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, nuisance or annoyance. This is a low threshold, and while certain behaviours may be nuisances to individuals, they may not be reasonable or appropriate to classify as ASB.

4.3 Examples of nuisance behaviour that may be intolerable to one party but not necessarily considered ASB include, but are not limited to:

- Issues with parking spaces, particularly where there are no designated spots or laws are being ignored.
- Disputes over the placement of wheelie bins.
- Boundary disagreements.
- Unreasonable cooking smells.
- Reasonable living noises such as a baby crying, children playing, flushing toilets, general shutting of doors, vacuuming, DIY projects, using household appliances during acceptable hours, particularly in upper-floor flats; and lawn mowing.
- Reasonable noise that impacts on shift workers.

4.4 One resident may be affected by a neighbour's behaviour, even if no harm is intended. For example, noise from everyday living might carry through thin walls.

4.5 The Council will not label residents as perpetrators in these nuisance cases or usually take legal action. We are committed to promoting good relationships and while our options may be limited, we will do our best to offer support and guidance to help resolve issues.

5. Nuisance Reports - What You Can Expect

5.1 Fair and Transparent Assessment and Prioritisation

The Council is committed to a fair and transparent approach when assessing and prioritising reports of nuisance behaviour, ensuring that the most effective course of action is taken. Initial details may be collected by any of the Council's officers; at the earliest opportunity an officer allocated the case will contact the complainant to gather the necessary information and fully understand the situation.

The Housing Services Team will triage all reports of nuisance behaviour using a matrix of options, see Appendix One, and carry out a risk assessment to determine the prioritisation of managing each nuisance report.

Triage is defined as conducting a preliminary assessment to determine the urgency and nature of the need for action.

If one party is in private accommodation the team will liaise with colleagues in Environmental Health to work through the triage process in conjunction with their procedures.

If the nuisance reported qualifies as Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), it will be handled under the ASB Policy; otherwise, it will fall under this policy.

The Housing Services team will inform the complainant as soon as possible about which policy will govern the matter and the reasoning behind this decision.

Triage of the nuisance report will involve:

- Data Collection
- Identifying the nature and category of nuisance
- Identifying the type, frequency, time of day, and duration of the nuisance
- Understanding the severity of impact on the party/parties
- Understanding what existing mitigation efforts have been tried
- Assessing the priority of action based on the information gathered

5.2 Proactive Problem Resolution

The Housing Services Team will work with the complainant to identify, and provide support for, any initial courses of action that may deescalate the situation.

While the team will always consider the impact and any harm caused by the nuisance, this does not automatically mean that anyone is at fault. For instance, if noise is transferring between properties due to poor sound insulation or thin walls, this may have a significant effect. However, if the other party is simply carrying out normal living activities, it would not be fair to hold them responsible for the disturbance. In these situations, the team will focus on improving sound insulation, supporting the complainant, and working with the other party to explore ways to reduce the nuisance.

The team will discuss with the complainant any number of options for resolving the issue which may include proposing the wording for a conversation; sending the 'Good Neighbour Postcard'; supporting access to mediation; working out a Good Neighbour Agreement; accessing the Victim Care Fund; working with other partner agencies e.g. The Council's ASB Team, Environmental Health, Remedi, Neighbourhood Watch, and local Police teams.

All parties involved, including relevant partner agencies, will be contacted in a timely and proactive manner as agreed at the start of the case management process. The goal is to support tenants in resolving the issue without unnecessary delay.

Because these situations rarely involve tenancy breaches or Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), legal action is unlikely to be part of the response.

Once all appropriate options have been explored and no further action can be taken, the team will inform all parties involved that no additional support can be provided.

Proactive resolution of the nuisance report will include:

- Determining the action to take
- Taking the action
- Documenting and tracking the situation
- Following up as agreed with all parties
- Assessing the effectiveness of the solution/s
- Documenting and implementing any learning from the nuisance case

5.3 Commitment to Listening, Understanding, and Communicating

Throughout the process, Council officers will communicate fairly and transparently with all parties, at the agreed frequency and in the agreed methods.

The Housing Services Team will actively consider the individual support needs of those involved.

The Council recognises that a person's health and well-being can affect how they experience and respond to certain situations. When receiving nuisance reports, the team will consider whether any party has any health-related needs that may require assistance.

This may require more information to assess the situation properly. The team may ask for this information directly, or for consent to gather it on the party's behalf. While sharing this information is voluntary, not providing it could limit the support the Council is able to offer.

The Council understands that personal circumstances can sometimes impact a person's tolerance, perception, or ability to manage certain situations. Where these factors are identified, we will work to make suitable referrals and provide additional support.

5.4 Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The Council is dedicated to continually improving the way services are delivered to our customers. We will explore feasible actions that the Council can take to resolve each situation, prevent its recurrence, and involve all parties in shaping future service delivery standards.

The Council collects and uses feedback from Residents, Tenants and Leaseholders, to drive improvements in meeting customer standards. The Council's performance against its Community Plan is measured, reported and [published](#) quarterly on the NSDC website as are the [results](#) of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey.

5.5 Preventative Approach in Housing Allocations

To avoid repeating situations involving lifestyle or structural nuisance, we will review housing allocations to identify potential risks and take mitigating action in line with the Allocations Scheme not to place tenants or leaseholders in properties where noise cannot be mitigated.

Wherever practicably possible the Council will seek to address any known structural issues within properties that contribute to nuisance reports.

6. Partnership Working and Information Sharing

6.1 There may be situations where the Council cannot resolve an issue alone and will need to collaborate with partner agencies, with whom we have excellent working relationships. In such cases, information may be shared with relevant partners to ensure the best possible support and guidance is provided to all parties involved.

6.2 In some instances, this may need to involve medical professionals, social prescribers, the police, or other organisations to help address the situation effectively.

6.3 We are committed to sharing, storing, and disposing of information in accordance with relevant legislation and local information-sharing protocols.

7. Requests for Confidentiality

7.1 This policy aims to build positive relationships, so we may not be able to help if complainants wish to remain anonymous. Open communication is key to resolving issues.

7.2 In some cases, The Council will be unable to guarantee confidentiality, such as when there are safeguarding concerns, or a crime has been committed.

7.3 The Council appreciates it can be hard to see a situation objectively when facing difficult behaviour; where parties do not always agree with the decisions taken a full explanation will be given.

8. Making a Complaint or Providing Feedback

8.1 The Council has a Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy. We welcome both complaints and feedback. If we are doing something wrong or if you're not satisfied with our service, please let us know. Equally, if you're happy with something we've done or want to share positive feedback, we'd love to hear about it.

8.2 You can submit a complaint or provide feedback in a variety of ways: online, by letter, telephone, email, social media, in person, or through someone acting on your behalf.

8.3 Details can be found here:

[Customer complaints and feedback | Newark & Sherwood District Council](#)

9. Tenant Co-production and Engagement

9.1 When creating this policy, the Council worked with tenants to influence its structure. Tenants told us it was important to have clear communication from start to finish, respect between landlords and tenants/leaseholders, and for the Council to be transparent in its actions.

10. Equality & Diversity

10.1 We are committed to providing equal and fair access to our services, considering the individual needs of tenants and their households. We will make reasonable adjustments throughout the repairs process as needed, in line with our policy. We treat everyone fairly and with respect.

All staff receive mandatory Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion training, which is monitored by our internal team. Our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy complies with the Equality Act 2010.

Approval, Consultation and Review

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Appendix One

Triage Prioritisation Matrix

Triage involves:

- Data Collection
- Identifying the nature and category of nuisance
- Identifying the type, frequency, time of day, and duration of the nuisance
- Understanding the severity of impact on the party/parties
- Understanding what existing mitigation efforts have been tried
- Assessing the priority of action based on the information gathered

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