

Antisocial behaviour policy

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1. Introduction:

- 1.1 Local Space provides a unique range of settled and key worker accommodation vital to its position in Inner London. We recognise that to achieve our mission to provide quality and safe homes for those in need, we must work closely with our residents and partners to tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and prevent it from developing.
- 1.2 In managing our accommodation, we will act to address and prevent ASB, domestic abuse or hate incidents; we will investigate all reports thoroughly and we will ensure victims are supported out of the harm caused by these behaviours.
- 1.3 Our ASB Policy applies to all tenants with a Local Space tenancy in accommodation we directly manage; social rent, key worker, affordable rent and intermediate rent. Partners managing Local Space properties on our behalf have their own ASB Policy in place and we are committed to ensuring these are no less robust and supportive than our own.

2. Aims of the policy:

- 2.1 Our ASB Policy aims to enable residents to live peacefully within their homes without unreasonable disturbance from others by:
 - Making it easy to report ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents
 - Responding quickly and in a robust manner to incidents of ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents
 - Ensuring residents are clear on their tenancy obligations
 - Inspiring confidence amongst residents to report ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents and that this behaviour will be challenged
 - Ensuring complainants are kept informed of actions taken
 - Using a full range of measures to manage ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents and their underlying causes
 - Providing a framework for supporting victims, witnesses and vulnerable perpetrators
 - Acting urgently with legal action where we and the Police consider there is a significant risk of harm, or a serious criminal act has been, or is likely to be committed
- 2.2 Local Space protects and supports staff who work alone to minimise risk to colleagues, clients and those who may be affected by their activities. Our staff will be trained to deal with complaints of domestic abuse and hate incidents in a sensitive manner and to engage victims with support agencies.
- 2.3 Our Equality and Diversity Policy applies to the provision of housing and related services. Local Space acknowledges that in society, certain groups and individuals may face unfair and unlawful discrimination. We are committed to ensuring that equality of opportunity is upheld in all our activities. This means providing a fair chance for everyone, without unlawful discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs, HIV status, disability, race, nationality, or

national or ethnic origin. Our goal is to create an environment where diversity is respected, and every individual can succeed.

- 2.4 Employees, contractors and anyone who works for, or on behalf of Local Space have a responsibility under this policy, when carrying out their duties, to record and report domestic abuse and hate incidents.
- 2.5 Local Space regards the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important to its successful operations and to maintaining confidence between the employees, tenants and those with whom it carries out business. For more information about how we deal with personal information please see our Data Protection Policy.

3. Legislation, regulation and policies:

3.1 Statute:

- Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- Reform of anti-social behaviour powers statutory guidance for frontline professionals 2014
- Housing Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

3.2 Related Local Space Documents:

- Local Space Corporate Plan
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Estate Management Policy

3.3 Regulator of Social Housing Regulatory framework:

- Neighbourhood and Community Standard: Consumer Standards (April 2024)

4. Types of ASB

- 4.1 Local Space uses the definition of ASB in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014;

- Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person or
- 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

4.2 Types of antisocial behaviour that will typically be recorded and action taken includes:

- Threatening, harassing or unruly behaviour such as drunkenness and loitering in public spaces
- Drug use – and the mess and disruption that can go with it
- Vandalism, graffiti, fly-tipping and littering
- Disruptive neighbours
- Noise – for example playing loud music at unreasonable hours
- Uncontrolled and noisy pets – for example barking every night
- Environmental health issues such as fly tipping and rubbish dumping
- Vandalism and graffiti
- Hate crime incidents motivated by someone's age, disability, faith, sexual orientation, or race
- Harassment, including verbal and physical abuse and threats.
- Acts of violence

4.3 Our tenancy conditions mean our customers have agreed that they, members of their household and their visitors will not:

- Cause or act in a way that is likely to cause nuisance or annoyance or disturbance to any other resident, their household or visitors or to employees, agents or contractors of Local Space or to any other person in the locality.
- Commit any form of harassment or threat of harassment on the grounds of race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability

4.4 Our customers have also agreed not to permit, incite or cause any type of violence or threat or violence anywhere against any other person living with them or make anyone who lives with them leave the home because of domestic violence.

4.5 Building relationships with the communities where we work is critical to meeting our residents' needs generally and to managing ASB specifically. However, many of our homes are leased from third party superior landlords who own the buildings our homes are within, therefore collaboration with them, and holding them to account regards incidences of ASB, are equally important.

4.6 Our approach enables us to work with our tenants as either victim or perpetrator and equally with other residents who may be either the cause of, witness to, or victim of ASB involving our tenants.

5. Hate Incidents:

5.1 Local Space is opposed to all forms of hate incidents; positively supports residents who are victims of hate incidents and will act against perpetrators of hate incidents; whether residents, employees, agents or third parties.

5.2 A hate incident is any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or transgender status.

6. Domestic Abuse:

6.1 Local Space has a zero-tolerance policy on domestic abuse and is committed to being proactive in supporting victims living in properties we manage. For more details, please refer to Local Space Domestic Abuse and Violence policy.

7. Partnership Working:

7.1 We take a problem-solving approach and recognise this can only be achieved through effective partnership working to prevent and manage ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents. For Local Space, our key partnerships to address ASB effectively are with our third-party superior landlords and their managing agents. We will therefore be proactive in building collaborative relationships with these partners to ensure a robust response to tackling ASB.

7.2 Where appropriate we will also involve the following partners as necessary:

- Community Safety, ASB, Environmental Health; Social Services, and Education teams in the local authorities where we work
- Metropolitan Police including joint visits with Police Community Support Officers and related community-based cooperation with the Police
- Mediation services
- Community drug and alcohol projects
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) where information is shared between agencies involved in domestic abuse and to produce multi agency action plans in response to issues of high risk

8. Preventing ASB:

8.1 Local Space recognises the importance of preventing ASB in our neighbourhoods by:

- Including clauses relating to ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents in our tenancy agreements
- Supporting the exclusion of applicants from our waiting list where there is a history of crime, ASB, domestic abuse or hate incidents
- Explaining the rights and responsibilities with regards to ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents to all new tenants at sign up
- Visiting all new tenants and discussing any tenancy issues or concerns early in the tenancy
- Identifying potentially vulnerable households and offering advice on the support services available

- Supporting local initiatives that provide activities such as sports, youth clubs and other community-based projects
- Publicising positive outcomes to residents
- Working with our partners to design out crime in our neighbourhoods
- Working with our partners to raise awareness of domestic abuse and hate incidents

9. Supporting Victims and witnesses:

9.1 We recognise the courage that it can take for customers to report ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents, particularly in severe cases which can lead to court action. Local Space staff will ensure that anyone experiencing these problems, whether victim or witness, is supported, involved and kept informed of progress. We will normally only act on a case with the agreement of the complainant.

9.2 Our approach to victim and witness support includes:

- Making it easy for customers to report ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents complaints by providing a range of options: in person, by telephone, by letter, by email, through our website or through an advocate acting on their behalf
- Acknowledging the report in writing or by email
- Assessing the risk of harm from ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents followed by appropriate referrals to partner agencies
- Advising what priority has been given and why
- Agreeing regular communication and updates about the progress of a case and the method of contact to ensure confidentiality and safety
- Ensuring that victims know that they can meet staff in confidence at our offices or at an agreed choice of safe venue
- Translating written materials on request and providing a translator where required
- Managing cases proactively using all options open to us and our partners to deliver a resolution which is satisfactory to victims or an understanding the case can go no further.
- Using third party evidence to prevent victims needing to be witnesses
- Improving security measures for victims and witnesses including property alarms; fire safe letter boxes; personal alarms; mobile telephones; CCTV and sound recording equipment; counselling; and negotiating priority response markers with the Police
- Using injunctions to protect victims and witnesses
- Permanent re-housing where there is no other option
- Escorting to, from and at court
- Giving victims of domestic abuse the opportunity to opt for a staff member of the same gender to deal with their case.

10. Managing ASB:

10.1 We will take an impartial and non-judgemental approach and maintain confidentiality.

- 10.2 A variety of supportive and enforcement tools (including eviction) will be used to deal with ASB perpetrators. Customers who engage in ASB risk losing their home.
- 10.3 We will prioritise our response by both the risk of harm and the type of ASB. High risk and severe ASB (Priority 1) will receive a response within 24 hours and all other ASB (Priority 2) within seven calendar days.
- 10.4 **Priority 1 ASB** - This is any situation where a victim risk assessment shows a high risk of harm irrespective of the type of ASB as well as behaviour, which may be targeted; is serious in nature and poses an immediate threat to personal safety or property.
- 10.5 **Priority 2 ASB** - This is where the risk of harm to the victim is assessed as moderate as well as behaviour, intentional or otherwise; which is persistent and continuous but does not present an immediate threat to personal safety or property.
- 10.6 Case management will be customer lead. It is important that the investigation into the case is carried out in a sensitive and sympathetic manner. Complainants will be provided with a named officer and action plans will be agreed at least monthly. We accurately record all reported incidents of ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents from our tenants, other service users and public.
- 10.7 The first response to reports of neighbour disputes will be to encourage customers to solve problems themselves by:
 - Considering whether their neighbour has a different lifestyle or culture and if their actions are unreasonable.
 - If it feels safe to do so, speaking with their neighbour directly who may not even be aware that they are causing ASB
 - If this does not resolve the dispute, we will encourage customers to engage in mediation
- 10.8 We will speedily and fully investigate reports of anti-social behaviour before deciding appropriate action. Our focus will be on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available. We will take action that is proportionate to the case. We will be realistic with residents about the action we can take; involve them in planning action and provide timely updates.
- 10.9 We expect the complainant to assist us in dealing with the ASB by keeping a nuisance diary; contacting Environmental Health directly; or contacting the Police where a crime has been committed or where there is an immediate risk of harm.
- 10.10 When considering the evidence, Local Space may decide there is no ASB and, in consultation with the complainant, close the case.
- 10.11 We will review the action plan and use pre-legal options such as mediation; warning letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts as part of the on-going review of the action plan with victims and witnesses.

10.12 As part of the on-going review, we may consider legal options such as civil injunctions, notices of seeking possession and evictions as a remedy of last resort. We will work with our partners to look at options available under the ASB, Crime and Policing Act such as Community Protection Notices, Dispersals and Closure Orders.

10.13 In consultation with the victims and witnesses involved we will close the case when the behaviour has stopped, and we are satisfied there is no further risk of harm or when all options have been exhausted and it is agreed that no further action can be taken.

10.14 Local Space will consider a perpetrator's vulnerability, work with partners to manage the root causes and engage the perpetrator with partners to provide appropriate support. However, vulnerability will not preclude enforcement action needed to support victims.

11. Monitoring and review:

11.1 During the lifetime of this Policy, we will investigate the option of using case closed surveys with victims of ASB, domestic abuse and hate incidents

11.2 We will use key results to monitor levels of ASB and our response to them:

- Number of cases responded to within timescale
- Number of cases closed with an outcome agreed by the original complainant

11.3 Learning from the performance information and complaints monitoring will be a standing agenda item at staff team meetings.