

Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

1. Introduction

Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) is committed to creating safe, healthy, and welcoming communities for our residents. We believe that fostering positive relationships between neighbours is key to enhancing the quality of life for everyone.

This policy applies to all residents, their households, and visitors, and is designed to complement our Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy.

We will do our utmost to promote good neighbour relations and tolerance of lifestyle differences in line with this Policy where we feel that a report is not ASB but may still cause distress or frustration.

Every person has different tolerances, expectations and perceptions when deciding if a behaviour is or is not appropriate. This means that some people will see certain behaviour as 'antisocial' even if the behaviour may be considered reasonable.

Some behaviour may impact a customer but there is no intention by the other customer to offend / cause harm or upset and therefore may not be considered as unreasonable.

2. Policy objectives

Plymouth Community Homes are committed to:

- Supporting our residents to feel happy and safe in their homes, by fostering safe and welcoming communities.
- Promoting good neighbour relations and tolerance of lifestyle differences.
- To educate residents on what constitutes deliberate ASB versus minor nuisances and provide them with the tools to manage these incidents.
- Providing options to resolve situations that are practical, and to empower residents to do so themselves.
- Working with partners in relevant organisations to help maintain good neighbourhood relations.
- Meeting our legal obligations.
- Remaining impartial.
- Treating hate crime and domestic abuse as unacceptable behaviour. We will follow our separate policy and procedure to deal with incidents of hate crime and domestic abuse.

3. How do we determine what fits into this policy?

We will triage all reports and use the following guidance to manage our response:

Where there is no deliberate intention	the incident will be handled through the Good Neighbourhood Management Policy.
Where there is no deliberate intention , but the behaviour lasts longer than 30 minutes at a time for more than 5 days in a row	this will be handled through the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.
Where there is deliberate intention	the incident will be handled through the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

4. Definitions of behaviour that would not be deliberately intentional

Examples of behaviour which we do not consider to be ASB include but are not limited to:

<p>Noise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General everyday noise such as opening and closing doors and going up and down stairs, washing machine noise and flushing the toilet • Celebrations and cultural differences • Occasional noise made by a tenant or their household member who has protected characteristics, e.g. a mental health condition or physical disability • DIY during the day • Isolated or occasional incidents of shouting/arguing.
<p>Untidy gardens</p> <p>We will follow out untidy garden and breach procedure when we receive a report or identify a garden that does not meet the tenancy obligations.</p>
<p>Misuse of communal areas includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • littering • placement of bins • boundary disputes • parking disagreements
<p>Reports that link to children including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of nuisance playing • Children crying

We will consider reporting it to the local Safeguarding team if we feel there are concerns for a child's safety.

Animal nuisance including:

- Sporadic and/or explainable dog barking
- cats in gardens.

Other forms of nuisance that we don't consider to be ASB are:

Smells from cooking and cigarette smoking

Reports linked to the use of medically prescribed cannabis

Clashes of lifestyle – for example a situation where two or more households have very different characters or ways of living and are unable to enjoy a good neighbourly relationship

Minor personal differences, such as receiving dirty looks, relationship breakdowns, children falling out or comments on social media

5. Managing customers' expectations

PCH will deal with all reports fairly and consistently, keeping residents informed throughout the process. This includes clear communication and an early assessment to determine whether the report falls under our Good Neighbourhood Management Policy or the ASB Policy. If the issue is not a deliberate disturbance and does not meet the threshold for ASB, it will be handled under this policy.

At an early stage we will manage any unreasonable expectations by making residents aware of actions we as a landlord are able to take, and those actions that we are not able to take and what options residents may have in those situations.

Neither confidentiality nor anonymity can be guaranteed, even when a resident requests it. This could include situations where we identify a safeguarding concern, or where a criminal offence has taken place.

6. Resolution options

PCH can offer several resolutions to resolve disputes and maintain positive neighbourly relationships. We will tailor our approach to each report. The types of resolutions may include:

- Ask if you can speak to your neighbour about your concerns, if it is safe and appropriate for you to do so. We will give you plenty of support and advice about how to approach this conversation.
- Encouraging you to send a Dear Neighbour Card – we have a template that customers can print off from our website to use to inform a neighbour that they are causing them disturbance or upset.
- We can contact the neighbour about the report to offer tips and guidance if the Reporting Person wishes us to
- Arrange and support mediation to resolve issues
- Good neighbour agreements to offer guidance between neighbours
- Suggest use of the Noise App – the app is a method used to record incidences of noise on a mobile phone. The team will then triage the noise complaint and decide whether this will fall under the Good Neighbourhood Management Policy or the ASB Policy.
- Refer to support agencies such as mental health, drug and alcohol and adult and children services.
- Initiate and participate in multi-agency working to discuss and attempt to resolve rising tensions.
- Arranging community events to build knowledge and understanding in neighbourhoods

7. Working with other organisations

PCH will work with partners in relevant organisations to develop consistent and effective measures to tackle instances where there are reports of ASB disputes, unreasonable behaviour and disturbances so we can support everyone involved.

8. Information sharing and Data Protection

PCH is committed to being open about how we are managing reports so that we can manage individuals' expectations about the outcome. This will include keeping reporting persons informed about what measures we are taking.

In applying this policy, we will comply with PCH's Data Protection Policy and ensure that the personal information supplied by customers is always protected. Any staff found abusing the case management system will be subject to the PCH Disciplinary Policy.

Within the provisions of our Data Protection Policy, we will share information with other agencies including Devon and Cornwall Police and Plymouth City Council where this is appropriate.

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity

PCH will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equalities Act 2010.

PCH will make this policy available in other languages and formats on request. PCH will carry out an equality impact assessment on this policy, in line with our corporate procedure.

9. Review

PCH will monitor this policy to ensure it meets good practice and current legislation and will review it in accordance with our review timetable for all policies.

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