

# LANGSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

## ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

### 1. AIMS

Langstane Housing Association aims to improve the quality of life for tenants by creating and maintaining sustainable communities in which anti-social behaviour is unacceptable.

A balanced organisational strategy has been developed to integrate anti-social behaviour issues into all levels of management within the organisation. Strategic level partnerships have been established with Local Authorities with the aim of exploring options to provide support to families threatened with evictions or who have been evicted due to anti-social behaviour, in line with Local Homelessness Strategies.

The Association is committed to resolving anti-social behaviour issues through mediation, conflict resolution and resettlement. The Association is an active participating member on the Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Moray Anti-Social Behaviour, Information Sharing Groups at which possible Anti-Social Behaviour Order response options are explored. Langstane Association cases will only be taken to those as and when preventative and management interventions have either failed or are considered inappropriate. The use of appropriate legal action including anti-social behaviour orders will only be used when preventative and management approaches have failed.

The Association defines anti-social behaviour in line with definitions contained within the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement and the Crime & Disorder Legislation of 1998, ie. "anti-social" means causing or likely to cause harm, distress, nuisance, or annoyance to any person, or causing damage to anyone's property. Harassment of a person includes causing the person alarm or distress. Conduct includes speech. A course of conduct must involve conduct on a least 2 occasions.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

- To provide a safe and comfortable living environment for tenants
- To adhere to realistic targets for dealing with complaints of anti-social behaviour
- To achieve realistic targets for response maintenance to deal with the results of anti-social behaviour
- To design-out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour in the development process
- To improve sound insulation levels
- To upgrade security provision as part of routine repair work
- To provide effective security for empty properties
- To identify the financial costs of anti-social behaviour

- To support tenants who are the victim of anti-social behaviour
- To support tenants address anti-social conduct where appropriate
- To use mediation, conflict resolution, and management initiatives in the first instance to resolve anti-social behaviour
- To use the appropriate legal framework when preventative and management approaches have failed
- To work in partnership with other agencies ie reporting of hate crimes using agreed protocols
- To ensure that all customers are treated equally, and in a manner which is sensitive to their individual needs

### 3. **PROCEDURES**

The Association receives a wide range of complaints, and they are dealt with by the staff after an initial classification process. All cases which are of an Anti Social nature are covered by this policy. The remaining complaints are covered by the Neighbourhood Complaints Policy.

The Association will ensure that procedures are in place to respond timeously and appropriately to complaints of anti-social behaviour and further to ensure that any damage caused by anti-social behaviour is dealt with within agreed timescales.

As the Association is committed to preventing anti-social behaviour staff will explain the terms of the tenancy agreement that apply to anti-social behaviour and discuss acceptable conduct with tenants as part of the pre-tenancy process.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Procedures will inform, and be informed by other procedures, for example, the allocations process and the repairs process.

Procedures to be followed by staff are held both on paper and computer format. The tenants' responsibilities and rights in relation to anti-social behaviour are contained clearly in the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenants Handbook.

### 4. **STAFF RESOURCES AND TRAINING**

The Policy is implemented by the Neighbourhood Services Team The Neighbourhood Services Team as a whole are fully trained in all aspects of dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour.

Training includes:

- Regular ongoing training in the legal framework affecting anti-social behaviour.
- Appropriate IT skills
- Repairs Reporting skills
- Dealing with difficult situations

- Early dispute resolution
- Mediation

Staff are encouraged to study for formal qualifications, for example –

- Mediation Accreditation

## 5. **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

All complaints cases are loaded onto a database, and from this the Anti-Social Behaviour process is monitored daily by the supervisory staff and section managers. Information which is reviewed includes the following:

- Categories of Anti Social complaints, and performance against target timescales
- Review of outstanding actions
- Overview of cases which are in process of legal action
- Incidents by tenancy location and Local Authority reporting area
- Incidents on vulnerable people covered by our Equal Opportunities Policy

Reports are made available on a monthly basis to the Director of Customer Services and produced quarterly to Tenants' Services Sub-committee and the Committee of Management.

### *Right to Complain*

*In the event you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please contact the Association for a copy of our Complaints Policy, which can also be viewed on our website.*

### *Equality and Diversity*

*The Association is committed to promoting equality and diversity across all areas of its work, and discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated.*

Approved by Tenants' Services Sub Committee: 31 July 2009

Review Date: 3 Years