

Neighbourhood Management Policy



Reference: HS_POL_HOU_NM_2.0 **Author:** Housing Services Manager

Scope: Housing Solutions **Approved by:** Executive Team

Legislation: Caravan Sites Act 1968 Protection from Eviction Act 1977 Mobile Homes Act 1983
Housing Act 1985
Housing Act 1988
Housing Act 1996
Protection from Harassment Act 1997
Crime and Disorder Act 1998
The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
Equality Act 2010
Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
Care Act 2014
Data Protection Act 2018
Torts [Interference with Goods] Act 1977
Housing Act 2004

Regulatory/ Governance: Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard
Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014: "Anti-social behaviour powers Statutory guidance for frontline professionals"
The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order

Date of next review: June 2027

Related Policies: Safeguarding Policy
Tenancy Policy
Data Protection Policy
Complaints & Compliments Policy
Allocations Policies
Health and Safety Policy
Mutual Exchange Policy
Vulnerable Residents Policy
Fire Safety Policy
Fire Risk Management Policy
Mobility Scooter Policy
Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
Keeping communal areas safe Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Our residents have the right to the peaceful and safe enjoyment of their homes. We also expect our residents to respect their neighbours, the immediate environment, their community, and our staff and contractors providing services to them.
- 1.2 Housing Solutions will work co-operatively with tenants and, other landlords and relevant organisations to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces used by our residents, but not owned by Housing Solutions..
- 1.3 This policy helps us deliver:
- Our mission to ensure residents are proud of where they live and can enjoy their homes and communities regardless of ethnicity, religion, sexuality, age, gender, gender identity, disability, and any other protected characteristic.
 - Our commitment to provide safe and well-maintained homes and communities in accordance with the Neighbourhood & Community standard.
 - A service which ensures residents and colleagues understand we are committed to creating and maintaining safe & sustainable neighbourhoods by providing proactive, effective neighbourhood management working with our partners.
 - Clarity on how and when we can intervene with environmental nuisance and neighbour disputes.
- 1.4 This policy sets out Housing Solutions approach to managing our neighbourhoods with the help of our residents, and trusted partners to keep our communities clean, safe, and secure.
- 1.5 Housing Solutions will deliver this policy and its approach in co-operation and partnership and with key internal and external stakeholders.
- 1.6 This policy applies to all categories of tenure and enables us to support, resolve or enforce as appropriate good neighbourhood management for all homes and properties owned and/or managed by Housing Solutions.
- 1.7 The roles and responsibilities relevant to this policy are:

Board	Supports the organisation in the fair and consistent application of this policy
Executive Team	Responsible for approving this policy and any amendments from time to time.
AD Housing & Resident Engagement	Responsible for recommending the strategic direction of the policy that feeds into the operational delivery for residents.
Housing & Estate Managers	Jointly responsible for managing the operational delivery and service quality of Housing & Estates services and ensuring compliance with this policy
Housing & Estate Team leaders	Responsible for overseeing operational delivery of this policy
Housing Team Estates Team	Responsible for neighbourhood management
All Staff	All staff are responsible for supporting the upkeep of safe,

2. Our Approach

- 2.1 We will highlight the key elements of this policy to all new residents as part of our onboarding and sign-up process so that our expectations are clear.
- 2.2 When a resident contacts Housing Solutions to raise a Neighbourhood Management issue, the officer who is first point of contact will deal with it in an appropriate and sensitive manner ensuring appropriate signposting and advice is given, this will be recorded on our Housing Management system.
- 2.3 We will review any vulnerabilities of our residents which are impacted by the policy on a case by basis to ensure we provide support and minimise risk. Where we suspect, or there is evidence a child or adult may be at risk, we will act promptly and in accordance with our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- 2.4 We will work co-operatively with residents other landlords (including where buildings have more the one registered provider as a landlord) and relevant organisations to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces.
- 2.5 Our approach to dealing with neighbourhood management issues includes but is not limited to:

(Non ASB related nuisance)

- 2.6 There are some incidents where a person's behaviour affects the quality of life of the local community and/or specific individuals) indirectly or the behaviour constitutes a minor breach of the person's tenancy with Housing Solutions. We do not categorise these incidents as Anti-Social Behaviour and we therefore seek to resolve these issues as outlined in this Neighbourhood Management policy using methods of self-help and early intervention. Examples of these incidents might include:
 - Untidy gardens
 - Noise nuisance which is not deliberate or targeted
 - Graffiti
 - Neighbour Disputes
 - Misuse of communal areas
 - Animal nuisance
 - CCTV nuisance
 - Littering & fly tipping
 - Vehicle nuisance including abandoned vehicles.
- 2.7 The following issues will **not** be investigated.
 - Issues perceived to arise due to people's differing lifestyles that are not intended to cause nuisance or annoyance.
 - Actions which amount to people being unpleasant to each other people or

people starting with no other associated ASB but are not sufficiently serious considering the likely harm caused to justify our involvement.

- Cooking smells
- Spreading rumours
- Children playing in their homes or in the locality of their home or designated playing area. (Including ball games)
- One off party
- Parking disputes (Our approach to parking management is detailed within this policy)
- Social media disputes
- Incidents that we believe will be vexatious where there is a history or pattern of allegations unsupported by evidence by the complainant.

2.8 It is important to be tolerant of other people's lifestyles and we expect a reasonable level of tolerance between neighbours. An important part of creating sustainable communities is the recognition and acceptance that residents initially have a responsibility to resolve concerns with neighbours themselves, where the incident / behaviour does not constitute ASB.

2.9 Ways in which residents may be able to prevent low level complaints being made against them may include:

- Informing your neighbours if you are going to be having a one-off social gathering.
- Not removing carpets from upper floor flats so that noise transfers to lower down properties.
- Considering the use of appliance mats if you are running washing machines etc. overnight.
- Telling your neighbours if your shift patterns have changed so they can be understanding of your needs.
- Being considerate of your neighbours
- Not carrying out DIY or other works late at night or at other unsociable hours
- Not playing music, TV, radio, or musical instruments too loudly
- Keeping dogs and other pets under control
- Being aware of where your children are playing, who is supervising them and what they are doing.

2.10 If you are not able to resolve any differences with your neighbour(s) you should contact us, and we may be able to provide additional advice or offer mediation to resolve the issue.

2.11 We will seek to adopt a problem-solving approach to proactively resolve such issues which may involve providing advice and information, offering mediation, or tenancy enforcement action in extreme circumstances where there is a clear evidenced breach of tenancy.

2.12 We will ensure staff are well trained and have the confidence to identify and problem solve neighbourhood incidents working in collaboration with our partner agencies.

Neighbourhood inspections

2.13 We will regularly inspect our neighbourhoods to ensure that any issues are proactively identified and resolved, quickly working in collaboration with our internal and external partners.

2.14 The frequency of these inspections is detailed below:

Inspection Type	Frequency
Playground H&S	Weekly
Blocks *	Monthly
Roads	Quarterly

Note: there may be occasions where we increase the frequency where there is an operational need to do so.

2.15 The neighbourhood inspections allow us to identify issues such as:

- Breaches of tenancy, including property condition, unauthorised property improvements, untidy gardens and anti-social behaviour
- Communal Repairs
- Misuse of the communal areas
- Health and safety hazards
- Fire safety or security concerns.

Playgrounds

2.16 We will ensure that playgrounds are managed and maintained as safe places for customers within our neighbourhoods and for the benefit of all users.

2.17 We will inspect these as per recommended guidance legislation, and on a frequency based upon the management requirements for each site.

Neighbourhood Walkabouts

2.18 We will publish an annual neighbourhood walking timetable on our website.

2.19 We will invite residents, councillors, and other partner agencies to join us as we complete the neighbourhood walkabout.

Keeping communal areas safe

2.20 We are absolutely committed to maintaining the safety of our residents. Good housekeeping is fundamental to reducing the risk of fire in blocks of flats. Controlling the presence of combustible materials and ignition sources not only reduces the potential of accidental fires (including trip hazards) in common parts, but also reduces risk of deliberate fires. Consequently, Housing Solutions has adopted a “zero tolerance” policy to ensure clear and concise expectations to staff and residents.

Our approach is detailed within our keeping the Communal Areas Safe policy which can be found on our website.

Communal Areas

2.21 Housing Solutions will consult all residents affected regarding a major change in the use of shared communal areas. We will make the final decision if there is any dispute regarding the use of communal space where agreement cannot be reached locally. Any such decisions will consider legal obligations, policy, local feedback, and any other considerations which may be relevant.

Shared gardens

2.22 Residents can engage with their local community through shared garden areas, and Housing Solutions will strike a balance between health and safety and their freedom to enjoy these outside spaces.

2.23 Bonfires are not permitted.

2.24 BBQs are permitted in communal areas subject to the following:

- No disposable BBQs
- Keep children and pets away from barbecues.
- Never leave the BBQ unattended
- Keep the barbecue at least 2m clear of any trees, dry vegetation, combustible material, flammable substances, buildings, sheds, and fences.
- Consider having a bucket of cold water, a hose pipe or suitably rated home use fire extinguisher to hand.
- Never pour flammable substances on a barbecue
- Store gas bottles safely and securely, this must be a lockable non-combustible storage container e.g. metal shed, and it must be located at least 2m away from the building.
- Barbeques must never be used or stored on a balcony.
- The BBQ, once cold, must be removed following use.
- Further advice is available on fire brigade's website - [Bonfires and Barbecues | Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service \(rbfrs.co.uk\)](http://Bonfires and Barbecues | Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (rbfrs.co.uk))

2.25 We will not install, maintain, or allow the installation of permanent BBQs within our shared areas.

2.26 Any BBQ identified and deemed as unsafe will be removed immediately.

2.27 Play equipment must not be used or left in shared garden areas (such as trampolines, swings, climbing frames, paddling pools or inflatable play equipment such as bouncy castles)

2.28 Any play equipment left within the communal areas will be removed.

2.29 Housing solutions will not be liable for any injury or damaged caused by the use off play equipment or BBQs (which we do not permit within our shared garden areas).

2.30 Individual residents will not be permitted to erect their own sheds in communal areas.

Permissions

2.31 Residents must seek permission if they wish to install anything within communal

areas, where permission is granted, these must be positioned in such a way as to avoid damage to the structure of the building and do not cause a nuisance or annoyance to others.

Communal entrance doors

- 2.32 To ensure that fire safety and general security is maintained within communal areas communal entrance doors must not under any circumstances be wedged open or a self-close device tampered with. Doors must always remain closed and secure.
- 2.33 We have a legal obligation to ensure our communal areas are safe, where communal doors are not secure, these should be reported to us without delay.
- 2.34 Keys for communal entry doors in blocks of flats will be provided as part of the signup process for new residents, where replacement keys are required, any costs relating to this will be recharged to the resident.

Fly tipping.

- 2.35 We take all reports of fly tipping seriously and ensure that it is dealt with quickly and efficiently.
- 2.36 We will seek to identify the perpetrator where the fly tipping has occurred on land we own or manage, requesting that the responsible person remove the items at their cost within a reasonable timescale. If these items are not removed, we will arrange for the removal of these items and a recharge will be raised to the responsible person to cover any reasonable costs incurred.

CCTV

- 2.37 We acknowledge that CCTV systems may be needed to help prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and the growing demand for domestic CCTV systems including doorbell cameras to help residents protect their homes. Our approach to CCTV is detailed within our CCTV policy.

Pet

- 2.38 We recognise the importance pets have for owners in terms of being part of the family as well as the positive impacts on mental and physical wellbeing. We therefore need to ensure our approach is balanced with the potential for nuisance to others if pet owners are not responsible in the way they care and manage their pet's behaviour. Our approach is detailed within our Pet Policy.

Untidy gardens

- 2.39 Untidy or unkempt gardens can impact upon the appearance of neighbourhoods and can be an indicator of poor property condition.
- 2.40 We recognise that there are many different garden design and management approaches and therefore we would only classify a garden as untidy or unkempt where:
- The garden appears to have been abandoned, left unattended or unkept for a period.
 - Plants, hedges, or trees have become overgrown impacting on pathways, highways, or neighbouring properties.
 - Waste is being stored or has been left in within the garden.

2.41 Following identification of this breach, should the resident fail to rectify the issue within the required timeframe, we will consider legal action to address the breach.

Graffiti / vandalism.

2.42 We do not tolerate acts of vandalism to our property or land.

2.43 Where offensive/racist graffiti is identified or reported we will remove this as an emergency in accordance with our repair priorities.

2.44 Criminal damage to our property or land will be reported to the police and, where those responsible are identified, action will be taken against the identified perpetrator(s).

Vehicle nuisance

2.45 Residents must not park or store any vehicle in a way which causes obstruction or nuisance.

2.46 We retain the right to remove any untaxed and or un-roadworthy vehicles parked on land owned or managed by Housing Solutions.

2.47 We will work with our residents to address inconsiderate parking. In some circumstances we may consider implementing parking management (subject to consultation with the relevant local community

Community Events

2.48 If residents wish to plan a community event advice from Housing Solutions must first be sought.

2.49 Public liability insurance may be required in relation to a community social event if it is organised by private individuals and not Housing Solutions.

2.50 Housing Solutions will not be held liable for any damage or injuries which may occur at such an event which has been organised by private individuals.

Garages and parking areas

2.51 Garage areas and parking areas owned and managed by Housing Solutions will be maintained in accordance with our estate's standards.

2.52 Garage and parking areas should not be used for repairing or fixing vehicles.

2.53 No trailer, caravan or boat should be stored in garage or parking areas.

2.54 Residents with a garage must adhere to the terms and conditions set out within the garage rental agreement.

2.55 Individual residents will not be permitted to erect their own sheds in communal areas.

2.56 Should storage be an issue, residents should seek advice from the Neighbourhood Team.

2.57 Housing Solutions will consult all residents affected regarding a major change in the use of shared communal areas. We will make the final decision if there is any dispute regarding the use of communal space where agreement cannot be reached locally. Any such decisions will consider legal obligations, policy, local feedback, and any

other considerations which may be relevant.

Pests / Vermin

2.58 Our approach to pests and vermin is detailed within our repairs policy.

Waste Management

2.59 Housing Solutions is responsible for removing litter and fly-tipping on land owned and managed by us, we will arrange clearance accordingly.

2.60 Housing Solutions will maintain communal bin stores and chutes.

2.61 Tenants / Leaseholders are expected to take all reasonable care to ensure that their household rubbish is safely stored and disposed of appropriately.

2.62 Tenants / Leaseholders are also responsible for making arrangements for the disposal of large items such as household furniture.

2.63 Housing Solutions will work in partnership with our Local Authority partners to encourage our residents to recycle their household waste.

2.64 We will, where possible, provide locations for the positioning of recycling facilities. Where a resident is unable to manage their household waste, Housing Solutions will work with the Local Authority to provide the necessary support and assistance.

Trees

2.65 Housing Solutions have an ongoing maintenance program in place to reduce avoidable risks associated with trees on properties owned or managed by Housing Solutions.

2.66 Our approach to trees is detailed within our tree management policy.

Communal Cleaning

2.67 We will ensure that internal communal areas are cleaned in accordance with the frequency and standards set out in our Estate Standards.

2.68 In accordance with our Keeping Communal Areas Safe policy, residents must keep communal areas free of personal belongings.

2.69 Tenants and leaseholders should play their part in keeping the community clean and safe.

Snow clearance and gritting

2.70 Our approach to snow clearance and gritting is detailed within our snow & ice policy.

Shared spaces (Not owned / Managed by Housing Solutions)

2.71 We will work cooperatively with third parties to assist in resolving issues affecting the upkeep and safety of shared spaces, not owned by Housing Solutions, but associated with our homes.

3. Legislation

- Housing Solutions will ensure that we comply with the legislation and guidance set out on page 1 of this policy. We will also remain up to date with any changes in legislation, guidance, and best practice.

4. Consumer Standards

4.1 By publishing and adhering to this policy, Housing Solutions is upholding the requirements set out in the Consumer Standards published by the Regulator of Social Housing.

- Safety and Quality Standard – which requires landlords to provide safe and good quality homes and landlord services to tenants
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – which requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard – which requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes
- Tenancy Standard – which sets requirements for the fair allocation and letting of homes and for how those tenancies are managed and ended by landlords

5. Equality and Diversity

Housing Solutions recognises the needs of a diverse population and always acts within the scope of its own Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Policy, the Human Rights Act 1998, and Equality Act 2010 to ensure that all tenants and prospective tenants are treated fairly and equally in making decisions under this policy. Housing Solutions works closely with its partners to ensure it clearly understands its resident community with clear regularly updated service user profiles. Housing Solutions will record, analyse, and monitor information on ethnicity, vulnerability, and disability alongside other characteristics as appropriate to support the fair application of this policy.

6. Confidentiality

6.1 Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR), all personal and sensitive information, however received, is treated as confidential. This includes:

- Anything of a personal nature that is not a matter of public record about a resident, client, applicant, staff, or board member.
- Sensitive organisational information.

6.2 We will ensure that we only involve other agencies and share information where there is a legal basis for processing the information or we are signed up to UKGDPR compliant Information Sharing Protocol.

6.3 We will treat all information received from complainants in relation to this policy in confidence and will seek residents' consent before sharing any information.

6.4 There may be some instances where Housing Solutions will be obliged to share information with a third party due to legal requirements, such as where there is child

protection or vulnerable adults' concerns. Any information would be shared in accordance with data protection requirements.

- 6.5 We may also share information regarding anti-social behaviour with other partners as part of their commitment to Community Safety partnerships. Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 allows information to be shared in the prevention and detection of crime and disorder. Information shared will be non-specific and anonymised wherever possible. Any personal information would be shared in accordance with data protection requirements.

7. Review

- 7.1 This policy will usually be reviewed on a three-yearly basis or more frequently in response to changes in legislation, regulatory standards or guidance, good practice, or changes in other relevant Housing Solutions' policy.
- 7.2 We will monitor our performance in relation to the delivery of our ASB service and activities set out in this policy on an ongoing basis through our established reporting mechanisms to our Executive Team, Board, and associated committees.