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Newark and Sherwood District Council

Good Neighbourhood Management Policy 2025 - 2028

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Aims of the Policy**
- 3. Good Neighbourhood Management**
- 4. Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour**
- 5. Nuisance Reports - What You Can Expect**
- 6. Partnership Working and Information Sharing**
- 7. Requests for Confidentiality**
- 8. Making a Complaint or Providing Feedback**
- 9. Tenant Co-production and Engagement**
- 10. Equality and diversity**
- 11. Appendix One – Triage Matrix**
- 12. Appendix Two - Associated Policies and Documents**

1. Introduction

1.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council is dedicated to delivering outstanding 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. This policy must outline how, in consultation with tenants and leaseholders, we will work to maintain and enhance the neighbourhoods surrounding their homes.

1.2 We are 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 we will approach and resolve complaints related to nuisance or disruption.

Our internal NSDC neighbourhood management procedure details the steps the Council will take 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 nuisance behaviour 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 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 an NSDC 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 Tenancy Officers for tenants to meet with council officers informally.
- Employ Street Wardens to function as eyes and ears across the district.
- Employ Tenancy Teams to manage tenancies, sustainment, and 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 NSDC 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

NSDC are 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. NSDC ASB Team, Environmental Health, Remedi, Neighbourhood Watch, and local Police teams; checking that a noise cancelling mat is fitted under washing machines; supporting the use of The Noise App.

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.

We 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 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 you wish to remain anonymous. Open communication is key to resolving issues.

7.2 In some cases, we cannot guarantee confidentiality, such as when there are safeguarding concerns, or a crime has been committed.

7.3 We understand it can be hard to see a situation objectively when facing difficult behaviour. While you may not always agree with our decisions, we will always explain our reasons.

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, we worked with tenants to influence its structure. They 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

NSDC Noise Nuisance Triage Matrix -Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

<p><i>Aim of this triage process –</i></p> <p><i>Through the effective management of neighbour and neighbourhood noise nuisance within the context of NSDC council neighbourhoods and housing stock to:</i></p>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life. • mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life. • and where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life. 				
Nuisance	Examples of outcomes on the person	Examples of nuisance source			Measures/Action	Policy			
No Observed Effect Level									
Nuisance Not present	No Effect	Source	None			Preventative measures – Tenancy agreement; Educational opportunities such as at the point of Sign-ups; GTKY visits; Good Neighbourhood management practices; Council officer presence in neighbourhoods; Community meetings and events; Tenancy Sustainment; Provision of quality housing services; a Happy Neighbourhood.			
		Frequency	None						
No Observed Adverse Effect Level									
Nuisance Present and not intrusive	Noise can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response. Can slightly affect the acoustic character of the area/home but not such that there is a change in the quality of life.	Source	Adults/Children/Babies/Teens Music Dogs / animals Bonfire Lawn Mower / Strimmer Vacuum cleaner Washing Machine Dust / steam / smells Walking Talking Children playing Ball games Inconsiderate behaviour Drug use Trouble making			Preventative measures as above, plus: Early intervention with complainant Encourage residents to communicate with each other Cleaner, safer, greener neighbourhoods Signage Intelligence gathering Safeguarding considerations Risk Assessment Partnership approach			
		Frequency	<i>Infrequent</i> <i>Low level</i> <i>Living noises</i> <i>One off</i>						
Good Neighbourhood Management									

NSDC Noise Nuisance Triage Matrix -Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

Lowest Observed <i>Adverse</i> Effect Level					Good Neighbourhood Management
Nuisance Present and intrusive	Noise can be heard and causes small changes in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response, e.g. turning up volume of television; speaking more loudly; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to close windows for some of the time because of the noise. Potential for some reported sleep disturbance. Affects the acoustic character of the area/home such that there is a small actual or perceived change in the quality of life.	Source	Living Noises Loud Walking Loud Talking Children playing Inconsiderate behaviour Drug use Trouble making Dangerous, nuisance or inconsiderate driving/riding Machinery/ Appliance use Disruptive sound Loud music Loud Party Dogs/animals Large gathering	Preventative measures as above, plus: Initial advisory conversation Encourage residents to communicate with each other Template note for complainant to use Officer monitoring Officer investigation into noise nuisance Partnership approach Reconsider safeguarding Mitigate nuisance and reduce to a minimum Cleaner, safer, greener neighbourhoods Signage Intelligence gathering Safeguarding considerations Risk Assessment updates	
		Frequency	<i>Infrequent</i> <i>One Off</i> <i>Regular noise</i> <i>Regular noise at unreasonable hours</i> <i>Regularly woken up</i>		
Significant Observed <i>Adverse</i> Effect Level					Good Neighbourhood Management & consideration of ASB policy
Nuisance Present and disruptive	The noise causes a material change in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response, e.g. avoiding certain activities during periods of intrusion; where there is no alternative ventilation, having to keep windows closed most of the time because of the noise. Potential for sleep disturbance resulting in difficulty in getting to sleep, premature awakening and difficulty in getting back to sleep. Quality of life	Source	Loud Walking Loud Talking Children playing Inconsiderate behaviour Drug use Trouble making Dangerous, nuisance or inconsiderate driving/riding Machinery/ Appliance use Loud music Loud Party Large gathering	Preventative measures as above, plus: Noise App Log complaint Diary Sheets Offer solutions Noise Equipment Assess evidence Action plan agreed Corroboration with partners Safeguarding referral Officer presence	

NSDC Noise Nuisance Triage Matrix -Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

	diminished due to change in acoustic character of the area/home.		Vehicle engine Chain saw Construction noise Roadworks Dogs/animals	Dynamic risk assessment on each contact with complainant Regular case reviews Equality Impact Assessment Refer to Legal team if necessary Issue appropriate warnings Moving away from neighbourhood management towards ASB policy actions.	
		Frequency	<i>Excessive, disturbing or unreasonable noise coming from a neighbouring property</i> <i>Sustained noise</i> <i>Sustained noise at unreasonable hours</i> <i>Regularly woken up</i> <i>Regular noise disturbance</i>		Consider ASB Policy
Unacceptable Observed Adverse Effect					
Nuisance Present and very disruptive	Extensive and regular changes in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response and/or an inability to mitigate effect of noise leading to psychological stress, e.g. regular sleep deprivation or awakening; loss of appetite, significant, medically definable harm, e.g. auditory and non-auditory.	Source	Any source identified as causing significant harm	Preventative measures as above, plus: Regular case reviews Dynamic risk assessment on each contact with complainant Review safeguarding options/actions	Likely to be ASB but not definitively
		Frequency	<i>Excessive, disturbing or unreasonable noise from a neighbouring property</i> <i>Sustained noise</i> <i>Sustained noise at unreasonable hours</i> <i>Regularly woken up</i>		

NSDC Noise Nuisance Triage Matrix -Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

Hierarchy of Actions – actions are not mutually exclusive and can run concurrently

- Determining the action to take
- Taking the action
- Documenting and tracking the situation on housing management system
- Following up as agreed with all parties
- Assessing the effectiveness of the solution/s
- Documenting and implementing any learning from the nuisance case on housing management system
- Sharing any learning with complainant & housing team

Nuisance/Noise report received	Complete CRM on NEC Housing Management System
Allocate report	To appropriate Housing Officer
Investigate noise complaint detail	Source/Level/Time of day/Frequency/Repetition/Intent/Effect on person/Before 07:00/After 23:00
Risk Assess	Based on initial investigations.
Engage with complainant	We can help by reviewing residents' concerns and discuss effective ways of communicating with one another. Provide advice on how best to communicate their problems or steps they can take to best manage the situation.
Visit the property	If appropriate/requested.
Amend Risk assessment	Following each contact/visit as required.
Getting neighbours to talk	Allows different perspectives to be discussed, awareness and understanding to be developed.
	If residents need more formal help, we can talk to both neighbours and try and work out a solution.
	When appropriate to do so, ask tenant/resident to approach their neighbour first, either in person or by using a "Hello Neighbour card".
	Residents will be encouraged to engage and communicate with one another and understand one another's point of view.
Confidentiality	We will seek to alleviate any concerns around confidentiality when residents request it.
Partnership working & info sharing	The reported problem may need assistance from other agencies, and we will work with partners to identify practical solutions.
Support	Identify vulnerabilities and support needs/consider the needs for the parties involved and work to identify suitable referrals and support.
Liaise with Environmental Health Team	If appropriate.
Mediation referral	Mediation brings the neighbours together in a structured way, it can be used between two individuals or for groups of neighbours. It's for cases when there is a clash of lifestyles or when both parties can take responsibility. Mediation can be together face to face or separately done. The outcome of mediation should result in better understanding between neighbours and a shared agreement between them.
Conduct a property inspection	Complete property inspections to establish any outstanding repairs or anything that may contribute to noise transference.

NSDC Noise Nuisance Triage Matrix -Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

	Work with residents around options that may help reduce noise transference, such as understanding the importance of carpets, removal of hardwood flooring etc.
Equipment	Ant-vibration mats for washing machine/tumble dryer
Dogs/pets	Complete Dog Ownership Agreements and provide information on how to be a responsible pet owner.
Agreements	Facilitate Good Neighbourhood agreements between neighbours.
Home move	Provide Housing Options to tenants and assist with applications under the Council's Allocation Policy or a mutual exchange.
Failure of interventions	In cases where our interventions fail or are not successful and impact continues, review the reports to check it is being handled under the correct policy.
Repeat cases	In cases where we have formally responded to a report within the last 12 months before reopening the report a second time, we may ask tenants to keep a log of reports to establish the frequency of the reported problem or refer tenants to solutions previously identified.
Community Building	Identify and execute community building events in partnership with the NSDC Community Development Team.
Tenant Engagement	Encourage tenants to join engagement opportunities.
Issue warning to tenant	Only if necessary.
Refer case to legal team	Only if necessary.

Closing reports under our Good Neighbourhood Management Policy commitments

- The Council requires the co-operation and support from all the parties involved.
- The Council may close the report when the parties refuse a reasonable request or when mediation is recommended and considered the best option but is refused.

Cases may also be closed when:

- The reported problem has stopped or is resolved.
- The report is anonymous.
- When there has been no contact from the reporting party for the last 4 weeks.
- The reporting party has been provided with the necessary support and advice to self-help.
- Either party has refused mediation and refuse to work constructively with one another.

The decision to close a case will be discussed and ideally agreed with all parties.

The decision to formally close a case will be provided in writing to both parties and include advice and steps to take should the report restart.

Although a new report can be opened all the information from the previous report will be held on file and will be referred to as necessary.

10 TIPS FOR BEING A GREAT NEIGHBOUR

We know that being on good terms with your neighbours can have a big impact on how much you enjoy your home and community. Here are 10 tips on how to be a great neighbour.

1

INTRODUCE YOURSELF - BE A FRIENDLY NEIGHBOUR

We want neighbours to get along. Being a good neighbour goes beyond following your tenancy—it's about building communities people are proud to call home.

2

BE CONSIDERATE OF SHARED WALLS IN YOUR HOME

If possible, keep noisy appliances away from shared walls, and avoid loud, repetitive sounds if you live above someone.

3

BE RESPECTFUL OF COMMUNAL AREAS

Avoid shouting or having loud conversations in shared areas. Make sure to clean up after yourself and your pets, and don't leave rubbish or litter.

4

KEEP YOUR GARDEN TIDY

Keep your garden tidy—clear weeds and rubbish, mow regularly, and use our service for bulky waste like old furniture.

5

RESPECT YOUR NEIGHBOUR'S PERSONAL SPACE

Be considerate, respect differences, understand that everyone needs their own personal space.

6

SHOW CONSIDERATION WHEN PARKING

Don't block entrances or garages, leave space for wheelchairs and prams, and ask guests to park considerately.

7

AVOID LOUD NOISE LATE AT NIGHT OR EARLY IN THE MORNING

Nobody likes to be kept up by a barking dog or woken up early by a lawnmower. Avoid playing loud music or using tools until the middle of the day.

8

BE THOUGHTFUL WHEN PLANNING A PARTY

Planning a party? Let neighbours know in advance, especially if noise might affect children or pets. Share your phone number in case they need to reach you.

9

THINK ABOUT WHERE YOU POSITION ITEMS IN YOUR GARDEN

Position BBQs, fire pits and outdoor lights considerately to avoid disturbing neighbours with smoke or glare.

10

BE KIND

Consider taking in your neighbour's bin whilst bringing in your own or offering to mow their lawn when you do yours. Respecting differences helps build stronger communities.