



Homes & Enterprise

Supporting BME Communities

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

APPROVED BY	Operations Committee
DATE REVIEWED	December 2020
DATE APPROVED	February 2021
DATE EFFECTIVE FROM	June 2011
DATE FOR REVIEW	February 2024

1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy statement is to set out for the benefit of our customers and partners, our approach to tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB), which includes hate related behaviour. We want to ensure that customers know what to expect from Unity if they are effected by anti-social behaviour.
- 1.2 Our customers include Unity tenants and leaseholders, and those impacted by the behaviour of our residents.

2. Policy aims and objectives

- 2.1 We will not tolerate ASB. We are committed to taking effective, appropriate and proportionate action. Our aim is to ensure that ASB is dealt with quickly and victims and witnesses are supported.
- 2.2 Unity will develop and maintain procedures for the effective handling of ASB complaints and work closely with relevant external agencies to achieve a satisfactory outcome for the complainant and the community.

3. Service standards

We have clear service standards when dealing with ASB which include:

- When a customer contacts Unity:
 - We will respond within 1 working day for serious allegations such as hate crimes or physical assault.
 - For all other reports of anti-social behaviour, we will respond within 10 working days
 - We will remove racist or other forms of offensive graffiti within 1 working day
- We will tell the customer the name of the Housing Officer who will deal with their case
- We will not reveal their identity unless the customer agrees that we can
- We will agree an action plan with the customer
- We will keep the customer up to date with the steps we are taking to deal with their case
- If we are unable to take action, we will explain the reasons
- We will advise customers of what support we and other agencies can give

them

4. Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour

4.1 Unity uses the following definition of anti-social behaviour taken from the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014:

Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

4.2 We also accept that there are other definitions of ASB but what is important to us is the effect that the behaviour has on others. Examples of ASB include:

- Violent, threatening and intimidating behaviour
- Harassment of all types including racial and homophobic harassment
- Using abusive or insulting words including graffiti
- Damaging or threatening to damage our property or another person's home or possessions
- Noise nuisance including loud music, shouting or slamming doors
- Criminal activity that affects the community including the use of our properties for illegal purposes

5. Hate crime and hate related behaviour

5.1 Unity will not tolerate hate related behaviour and will take prompt and effective action to support customers, their families and visitors when such behaviour occurs. We aim to support our communities by:

- Raising awareness of hate related behaviour
- Reducing tolerance of such behaviour
- Increasing the rate at which hate related behaviour is reported

5.2 A hate incident includes all forms of crimes, harassment or other unwanted behaviour that someone with knowledge of the incident believes is motivated by the perpetrator's prejudice or hate towards the victim resulting from the victim's actual or believed membership of, or another person in that household's actual or believed membership of a group defined by:

- Age
- Disability, including having learning disabilities or mental health problems Faith or beliefs

- Alternative sub-cultures
- Gender, including gender identity
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin or national origin
- Sexual orientation (a homophobic hate crime is focussed on sexual orientation, a transphobic hate crime is focussed on gender)

6. Legislation and regulation

We will have regard to all relevant legislation, regulation and good practice and the following requirements:

- Unity is required by the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 to publish a statement of our policies and procedures for dealing with anti social behaviour.
- Through the Community and Neighbourhood Standard our regulator expects Unity to:
 - Keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with our tenant's homes clean and safe
 - Co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where we own properties
 - Work in partnership with other public agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where we own properties
- We committed to developing services that meet the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Housing Respect ASB Charter for Housing.

7. Unity's approach to anti social behaviour

7.1 **We will demonstrate leadership and strategic commitment**

Resources - We will allocate sufficient resources to deal with ASB and ensure that our staff receive the necessary training to deliver an effective service.

Obligations - We will ensure that all customers are aware of their obligations under the tenancy agreement and make it clear that ASB will not be tolerated.

Partnership - We will actively engage with relevant partners including councils, police and local community safety partnerships. We will share information with our partners to prevent and tackle ASB.

Performance - We will monitor our performance and measure how well we deliver on our service promises to customers by conducting surveys of service users to assess their levels of satisfaction.

7.2 We will provide an accessible and accountable ASB service

Access - We will provide an ASB service that is widely accessible to all our customers and encourage the reporting of ASB.

Information - We want to ensure all our customers are aware of the service that we provide. We may do this to publicising the actions we take in order to build community confidence, deter individuals from engaging in ASB and assist in the enforcement of court orders.

Tailored - We want to provide services that meet the needs of our customers. To do this we will collect information about the profile of our customers and use this information to review and shape our services.

Neighbourhood - We cannot tackle ASB without the help and support of the community. Where it is appropriate we will work with customers and community groups to develop a neighbourhood approach to tackling ASB.

7.3 We will protect communities through prompt enforcement action

Enforcement - We will try to resolve cases without the need to take legal action against individuals. Where ASB is persistent or of a serious nature we will not hesitate to take enforcement action against perpetrators. Where it is more appropriate we will support others in taking legal action.

Tools - We will ensure that staff are aware of the full range of tools and powers that are available to us and to our partners.

Casework - We will adopt a consistent and robust approach to how we respond to reports of ASB. We will ensure that victims and witnesses are kept up to date and agree action plans. We will undertake sample quality audits of ASB case files to ensure our procedures are followed.

Evidence - We will take a proactive approach to gathering evidence from a wide range of sources to support effective enforcement action. Our response to incidents of ASB will be evidence based and proportionate to the effect that the ASB has on the victim and the community.

7.4 We will adopt a supportive approach

Witness support - We recognise that support for victims and witnesses is essential to tackling ASB. We will do all we reasonably can to identify those that are vulnerable and their support needs.

7.5 We will encourage individual and community responsibility

Tolerance - We will work to build strong communities by promoting individual responsibility and tolerance. We will do this by encouraging customers to resolve neighbour disputes directly.

7.6 We will focus on prevention and early intervention

Allocations - We will ensure that our approach to allocations contributes towards building sustainable communities. To achieve this, we may adopt local lettings policies.

Hotspots - We will work with partner agencies to identify ASB hotspots and work jointly to put in place initiatives to tackle the root causes of ASB.

Diversion - We will work together with partners, the community and voluntary groups when it is possible to provide diversionary activities.

Early intervention - We will intervene early and deal with problems quickly and try to prevent them from escalating.

7.7 We will ensure a value for money approach

Value - We will apply our value for money principles to the ASB service and work towards understanding our ASB service costs.

8. Responsibilities, monitoring and performance

8.1 Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Housing Services Manager. The Housing Services Manager will ensure that staff receive the appropriate training and support to achieve the objectives of this policy.

8.2 Monitoring of the implementation of this policy will be the responsibility of the Operations Committee. We may set performance targets for the ASB service. Progress against these targets will be reported to the Operations Committee and Senior Management Team.

9. Associated policies

- Lettings Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Tenancy Management Policy
- Complaints and Feedback Policy

10. Document management

Policy title	Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
Policy group	Community Safety
Date created	February 2013
Policy owner	Housing Services Manager
Authorised by	Operations Committee
Date authorised	
Review period	3 years
Date of next review	February 2024

Consultation and assessment

Customer consultation	Policy previously approved by the Residents Panel. Further consultation not required for minor changes to content.
Equality Impact Assessment	EIA completed in 2013 after major overhaul. No negative impact identified. This policy recognises that certain groups may be more likely to suffer from incidents of ASB or may be unwilling to report ASB. This policy will ensure all customers can access an ASB service and receive a service tailored to the individual.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required. Minimal risk of data breaches. Information sharing agreements in place with key community safety partners.

Document review history

Version	Date amended	Date approved	Key changes
1.0	February 2013	February 2013	Original document
2.0	February 2016	February 2016	Routine policy review. No amendments made to policy.
3.0	August 2017	November 2017	Detailed policy review.
4.0	October 2020		Content subject to routine review with minor text changes.