



A SUMMARY OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

Redland Housing Association has in place policies and procedures for dealing with nuisance and anti-social behaviour. We also produce a plain English leaflet which gives guidance and advice to residents on the subject.

The purpose of this document is to summarise our policy and procedure and to do so in a way which is resident-focused, explaining what our policy covers and how to use our procedure.

POLICY

Our policy and strategy statement sets out our strategic position: how we define nuisance and anti-social behaviour, how we deal with complaints and how we manage anti-social behaviour. In particular, the policy covers:

- the responsibilities of tenants
- how we respond to complaints
- finding out what complaints are about
- how quickly and in what way we deal with complaints
- what action we will take to address anti-social behaviour
- ways we can prevent anti-social behaviour
- getting help and support from other agencies
- helping people improve their behaviour
- gathering evidence of nuisance and anti-social behaviour
- taking legal action against nuisance and anti-social residents
- dealing with harassment and domestic violence
- treating complaints as confidential
- exchanging information with other agencies
- monitoring where and when anti-social behaviour occurs and how successful we have been in dealing with it.
- treating people fairly and giving equal access to our services.

A copy of our policy statement is available on request, at no charge.

PROCEDURE

Our procedure statement sets out how our staff are expected to deal with complaints, the steps they will take and the factors they will consider, and how they decide what to do.



Our plain English residents' leaflet, a copy of which is given to all tenants, gives general advice and information. Further copies are available on request.

Residents who need to make a complaint should contact their housing officer. Contact can be made by letter, telephone, in person (by appointment) or by Email.

There may be other agencies who can be contacted for help. For example, if the complaint concerns noise it is advisable to contact the local authority environmental health department for advice. If the complaint concerns violent or unruly behaviour then the police should be contacted.

Complaints will be dealt with by the relevant housing officer. Their aim is to respond quickly and positively and provide appropriate advice and support following the Association's procedures. These set out

- an initial response and assessment
 - if the complaint is made by telephone or in person, by discussing the issues
 - if the complaint is made by letter, reading and responding to the letter
 - deciding whether and how to approach the other partyand the outcome will be to agree the next steps, and to write and confirm this agreement.
- Establishing the facts
 - by asking for written evidence
 - by asking that a log be kept
 - by visiting one or both of the parties concerned
 - considering the response of the other party.
- Assessing what action is appropriate and making a planned response
 - considering whether to involve other agencies
 - considering whether appropriate support might help the person responsible improve their behaviour
 - considering whether mediation is appropriate
 - considering whether informal agreements (acceptable behaviour contracts, for example) might be appropriate
 - gathering evidence
 - considering whether formal, legal, action is appropriate.



- Maintaining contact with the complainant
 - to confirm what is happening
 - to provide ongoing support
 - to explain the reasons for decisions
 - to keep abreast of events.

- Recording events
 - ensuring that proper records are kept of all conversations, meetings and so on
 - ensuring that all parties involved are asked to keep proper records of events.

- Closing cases
 - when the nuisance or anti-social behaviour ceases
 - when the Association has done all it can to help or advise
 - when there is no ongoing evidence of nuisance or anti-social behaviour
 - when successful action has resolved the problem.

- Explaining how the Association's formal complaints procedure works
 - giving access to a fair and transparent review of actions and decisions
 - ultimately giving access to the independent Housing Ombudsman service
 - providing the Association with feedback on our service.

- Providing support to complainants and victims
 - through referrals to external support agencies
 - making use of the Association's established links with organisations such as SARI, Missing Link, 2nd Step and others
 - considering witness protection measures, including physical alterations to property
 - providing emotional and practical support to witnesses, including help through the legal process and escort to court
 - helping tenants who need re-housing and using appropriate features of our lettings' policy.

Our procedure also gives good practice guidance to staff about

- Interviewing: considering whether to interview in person or by phone, preparation for interviews and interview techniques.

- Responses to alleged perpetrators of anti-social behaviour: dealing with complaints sensitively but firmly.



- The various tools available for dealing with nuisance and anti-social behaviour: mediation, working in partnership with other agencies, informal agreement such as acceptable behaviour contracts, formal - legal - action including possession, anti-social behaviour orders, injunctions and demoting tenancies.
- The importance of evidence and record keeping: ensuring that Redland keeps good records of all events and that victims and witnesses are encouraged to do likewise: respecting confidentiality.
- Involving communities and other agencies in taking preventative measures to counter anti-social behaviour.

INFORMATION

The following documents are available free of charge and on request

- Statement of policy and strategy for dealing with nuisance anti-social behaviour and harassment.
- Anti-social behaviour procedure statement.
- Residents' leaflet: nuisance and anti-social behaviour.
- Complaints policy and procedure.
- Residents' leaflet: complaints.
- Residents' leaflet: racist incidents and racial harassment.
- Residents leaflet: relationship breakdown and domestic violence.
- Policy on dealing with racist incidents.