

Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

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Author(s): Head of Housing Operations

1. Our policy statement

- 1.1. This policy outlines Sage Homes' considerations, actions and limitations when dealing with issues that do not meet our definition of antisocial behaviour (ASB). While these issues may not qualify as ASB, they can still cause significant distress and frustration, leading to tensions between neighbours and within the wider community. This policy is designed to guide our response to such situations and invite parties to be part of creating a solution in achieving better outcomes.
- 1.2. Each case depends on how an experience affects an individual and the intent behind the behaviour. Customers will have varying levels of tolerance, expectations, and perceptions of what constitutes appropriate behaviour. Some customers may perceive certain actions as antisocial, even if those actions might be considered reasonable by others.
- 1.3. The focus throughout this policy is on fostering good relationships between customers, creating harmonious communities and identifying solutions that are appropriate and proportionate to the concerns raised. We are committed to ensuring that customers have the necessary information to manage neighbourhood issues and understand how to escalate concerns when needed.

2. The scope of this policy

- 2.1. This policy applies to all types of occupancy that we own and/or manage.
- 2.2. On 24 October 2022 the Housing Ombudsman published a report "Time to be Heard" that particularly focused on how noise complaints are managed by landlords. The report called for a fresh way of thinking where landlords manage non-statutory noise complaints differently to avoid neighbourhood disputes and to manage expectations. A key aspect of the report recommended that landlords develop a Good Neighbourhood Management Policy, which led Sage Homes to develop this policy.
- 2.3. A list of behaviours and actions managed under this policy is listed in Appendix A.
- 2.4. When we receive a report, we will consider whether it should be dealt with under our Antisocial Behaviour Policy or under this policy and will make this decision combined with professional judgement, to ensure we are making the most appropriate decision based on the specific circumstances of the report.
- 2.5. We may not always be able to assist with a situation that is dealt with under this policy as a single agency. There will be times where we may work with our partner agencies to share information and identify solutions.

3. Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1. Many situations that will be managed under this policy will require the cooperation, compromise and good will of the parties involved. Effective resolution may require parties to make reasonable changes to their behaviour and/or environment.
- 3.2. We seek to empower the parties involved to find their own solutions. Our role will be to direct customers to make appropriate decisions to resolve the situation and where necessary signpost customers to relevant agencies.
- 3.3. Our ability to assist in these cases will be greatly reduced where parties are not willing to cooperate with us in these ways and this may mean that we cannot assist any further.

4. Risk and vulnerability

- 4.1. There may be circumstances where the terms of this policy need to be reconsidered. We will be mindful of customer vulnerabilities and specific needs. Extenuating circumstances will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and exceptions may be applied with flexibility to ensure fair, and respectful treatment of all customers.
- 4.2. We recognise that if a report is not assessed as antisocial behaviour, it does not necessarily follow that there is low risk of harm/vulnerability. Sometimes a person's needs can be a contributing factor to how they perceive, respond to, or are impacted by, behaviour. Sage will carry out a risk assessment to consider vulnerabilities and the impact it is having.

5. Equality and diversity

- 5.1. Sage is committed to making sure all services are accessible to all our customers. Our staff will be trained to make sure they are communicating appropriately with our customers, and they have the relevant information.
- 5.2. This policy will be applied in a way which makes sure we treat all customers with fairness and respect. We recognise our duty to advance equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination or victimisation on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and any other protected characteristic defined within the [Equality Act 2010](#).

6. Delivery of this policy

- 6.1. This policy should be read alongside:
 - Antisocial Behaviour Policy
 - Communal Areas and Balcony Safety Policy
 - Parking and Abandoned Vehicle Policy
 - CCTV and Doorbell Camera Policy
 - Block and Estate Management Policy
 - Vulnerable Customers Policy
- 6.2. The effective delivery of this policy including training, guidance and support required by employees for implementation of this policy will be provided by the Housing Operations Team.

7. Policy review

- 7.1. We will review this policy at least once every three years to make sure it remains relevant and accurate unless:
 - Legislation/regulation or industry changes require otherwise, making sure that it continues to meet our aims and industry best practice.
 - We identify any problems or failures in this policy as a result of customer and stakeholder feedback, complaints, or findings from any independent organisation.

Version	Checked by	Amendments	Approved at/by	Date of Approval	Published by	Date of Review
1.0	Head of Housing Operations	New policy	LT	Oct 24	Head of Policy and Service Improvement	Oct 27

This policy is adopted by and applies to the companies which (at the time of adoption) bear the names Sage Rented Limited (Company No.:11217855), Sage Homes RP Limited (Company No.:11217910), Sage Green Homes Limited (Company No.:15028573), Sage Places Limited (Company No.:15028673), Sage Shared Ownership Limited (Company No.:14400040) and Sage Housing Group Limited (Company No.:11414570). “**Sage Homes**” or “**Sage**” means any one or more of them.

Appendix A –

The following (non-exhaustive) list of behaviours and actions fall under the Good Neighbourhood Management Policy:

- Parking
- Smoking
- Boundaries
- Dogs barking
- Cats in gardens
- Fences
- Untidy gardens
- Cooking smells
- Babies crying
- Placement of bins
- Children playing ball games/bikes
- Use of trampolines
- People looking/staring at each other
- Littering
- Working from home
- General living noise (flushing toilets, closing doors, talking)
- One-off celebrations
- Occasional noise made by a tenant or their household member who has protected characteristics, e.g. a mental health condition or physical disability

Other factors we will consider in relation to the behaviour are:

- The time of day
- The duration of the behaviour
- The frequency of occurrence
- The intention of the person causing the problem
- The harm that is being caused
- The vulnerability of those involved