Apex Housing Association

HM:TM:01 Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Apex is committed to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in a responsive and effective manner. We recognise that if allowed to persist, ASB can significantly affect the quality of life of our tenants and service users and that dissatisfaction with the housing environment may have a negative impact on the way we are able to manage our homes.

We recognise that ASB can include a range of activities and is a problem which has many causes. It requires a wide range of responses to tackle it effectively. We will balance enforcement action and intervention with programmes which aim to prevent ASB.

We will take a customer focussed approach to tackling ASB, working with the complainant and the alleged perpetrator, aiming to reach agreed actions, timescales and ultimately closures. Except in very serious cases, which are unlikely to be resolved at our first involvement, our initial intervention will aim to stop the problem behaviour. We recognise that early intervention is important to stop cases escalating.

We will consider legal action where there is sufficient evidence. Eviction will only be considered where other interventions have failed and will be used as a last resort. Eviction will also be used in very serious cases where it is needed to provide protection.

We will work with partner agencies to tackle the causes and effects of ASB, using a consistent and clear approach. Where necessary, we will use a multi-agency approach in dealing with ASB by sharing knowledge and expertise, including feedback to assess the effectiveness of interventions used.

THE LEGISLATION

Part II of the Housing (NI) Order 2003 was designed to extend powers to tackle anti-social behaviour in local communities. It provides for Introductory Tenancies and includes measures for developing the use of injunctions and extending the grounds for possession. In addition, Part IV of the 2003 Order, provides for persons who are unsuitable to be tenants because of their unacceptable behaviour to be treated as ineligible for housing accommodation or homelessness assistance.

The Anti-Social Behaviour (NI) Order 2004 enables the Housing Executive, Councils and Chief Constable of the PSNI to apply to the courts for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). Housing associations are not empowered to apply for ASBOs but can apply to the above relevant authorities to issue ASBOs on their behalf.

The Housing (Amendment) Act (NI) 2010 has also amended the grounds for possession set out in Schedule 3 to the Housing (NI) Order 1983 to provide that a conviction for any offence which involves the use of a dwelling house for illegal or immoral purposes will be grounds for possession.

The Housing (Amendment) Act (NI) 2011 provides for social landlords to withhold consent to an exchange of tenancies where an order or injunction relating to anti-social behaviour is in place; where an application for an order or injunction is pending before any court and where the tenant or proposed assignee, or person residing with either of them, has been convicted in connection with an offence which involves the use of the tenant or assignee's home for immoral or illegal purposes, or has been convicted of an indictable offence.

Further guidance can be found in the Department for Communities document entitled 'Anti-Social Behaviour - Guidance for Registered Housing Associations'.

WHAT IS ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

For the purposes of this policy, anti-social behaviour means engaging in, or threatening to engage in behaviour which:

- Causes, or is likely to cause nuisance or annoyance to a person residing in, visiting or otherwise engaging in a lawful activity in, or in the locality of any housing accommodation owned or managed by Apex Housing Association, or;
- Involves the use of housing accommodation owned or managed by Apex Housing Association for unlawful or immoral purposes.

This definition of anti-social behaviour is broad, and therefore we will evaluate all reports to assess whether we should be investigating and/or taking action.

Examples of anti-social behaviour might include, amongst other things:

- Violence or threats of violence
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour
- Hate crime – targeting members of identified groups because of their perceived differences (e.g. race, religion, political affiliation, disabilities or sexual orientation)
- Criminal activity
- Persistent and unreasonable noise nuisance (rowdy parties, loud music/TV's, dog barking)
- Environmental quality issues (litter, dog fouling, graffiti, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles)
- Offensive drunkenness
- Using housing accommodation for selling drugs or drug abuse or other unlawful purposes
- Intimidation and harassment

Whilst we will always aim to put victims first, we recognise that not every complaint made to Apex will be categorised as anti-social behaviour.

Examples of what might **not** be considered anti-social behaviour include:

- Noise from children playing in the street (unless they are causing damage, or are in an area where they are not allowed)
- Family disputes
- Babies crying
- Normal living noises (footsteps, doors closing, appliances)
- Smoke and cooking smells
- DIY during the day
- Disagreements about parking

- Staring
- Disputes on social media
- One-off parties, BBQs or celebrations

We understand that some of the activities listed above could, in extreme cases or where they are occurring repeatedly, be considered anti-social behaviour. Each incident will be considered on an individual basis and on its own facts, and our response will be one which is both reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances.

Where something is not categorised as anti-social behaviour, the reasons for this will be clearly explained at the time of the initial report to avoid raising expectations of further action on our part. We will offer relevant advice, including advice about mediation services and sign-posting to other agencies where appropriate and available.

We expect our tenants to behave appropriately and not to commit acts of anti-social behaviour. We also consider that our tenants are responsible for the behaviour of their family, household members, visitors and pets. This includes behaviour in communal areas and in the locality of the dwelling house.

These expectations are clearly set out in our tenancy agreement and are explained to all new tenants at their sign up and through their Good Neighbour Agreement.

SERVICE STANDARDS - WHAT OUR TENANTS CAN EXPECT

We will be sure to explain to complainants, from the initial logging of a case, the service that they can expect from us and likely timescales. If these timescales change throughout the investigation of a case, we will communicate this to those involved, along with an explanation for the delay. Timescales for investigating cases will depend on each case in turn.

Should any of the relevant parties be considered as potentially vulnerable (e.g. mental health or learning difficulties, elderly, disabled, Irish Traveller, foreign national for whom English isn't their first language etc), then Apex staff should ensure they communicate in a manner that the tenant will understand and provide additional support mechanisms where appropriate. Staff should refer to the 'Mental Health Pathways Guidance Note' for additional information and a Directory of Support available. Communication with vulnerable cases must be discussed and approved with the Senior Housing Officer and appropriate options considered for each case. In all cases and stages irrespective of additional support or communication methods required the tenant must be given the written correspondence letters. Some examples of options that may be considered are shown below but this list is not exhaustive and each case should be considered based on the tenants needs:

- Face to face meetings
- Telephone calls/virtual calls
- Obtain consent to include an independent representative, family/friend, where appropriate
- Obtain consent to refer to floating support/external support agencies to assist
- Consider if any statutory agencies are involved i.e. social services and any if any involvement is required from these agencies
- Consider if input required from specialist support agencies such as hearing/sight support services, language and interpreter services

For Irish Travellers or foreign nationals the support mechanisms within the following policy should be given due consideration: 'Tenancy Support for Irish Travellers & Foreign Nationals'.

All correspondence letters within this policy must be issued at the relevant stages regardless of individual tenant preferences or additional support and approaches offered by staff to vulnerable tenants.

We have adopted the following service standards for responding to logged cases of anti-social behaviour:

- Where it is deemed that the anti-social behaviour logged is serious (e.g. assault, arrestable offence etc), and there is a risk to people or property, we will contact to interview within 2 working days
- In all other instances of logged anti-social behaviour, we will contact to interview within 5 working days.
- We will agree a timescale with the complainant for keeping them informed of the progress of their case. However, due to GDPR legislation, Housing Officers/ASB Intervention & Prevention Officers should ensure that they do not disclose the exact action taken to the complainant. If the anti-social behaviour has been confirmed, the complainant should be advised that we have substantiated the allegation, and that action has been taken according to our ASB policy and procedure.
- We will ensure that we contact both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator to advise when a case of anti-social behaviour is being closed.

OUR APPROACH TO ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

We acknowledge that every individual is entitled to live in peace within their neighbourhood. We recognise that a large proportion of cases reported to us can be resolved without legal action, and we aim to create communities and an environment where victims and witnesses feel confident and safe in coming forward to report anti-social behaviour to us.

We will use a range of preventative measures and early intervention tools to stop anti-social behaviour at an early stage. These include:

PREVENTION:

- Secured by Design – The Department for Communities requires all Associations' new build homes, as well as major rehabilitation and re-improvement schemes, seeking Government funding, to achieve the 'Secured by Design' award. Whilst Secured by Design does not guarantee that a particular area will be crime proof, it indicates that the site has been subject to a design process and improved levels of security which, in the experience of the PSNI and other agencies, have been shown to significantly reduce the risks and the fear of crime.
- Requesting that all new tenants sign a Good Neighbour Agreement at the beginning of their tenancy. This document refers to the conduct that is expected of each tenant, as well as incorporating community safety and shared neighbourhood principles. This is a stand-alone document and is a voluntary charter that is additional to the legal tenancy agreement.
- New tenants are signed up on Introductory Tenancies for a 12 month period, unless they already hold a social housing secure tenancy. These are intended to address the specific problem of anti-social behaviour and allow Apex to assess the suitability of an individual to

hold a secure tenancy. Introductory tenancies also enable the Association to evict more easily, if an introductory tenant breaks the terms of their tenancy agreement.

- Estate visits are carried out by Housing Officers on a regular basis, so that we are aware of, and can take action on, unreported problems at an early stage.
- Tenancy Engagement activities are regularly carried out on our estates to encourage an atmosphere where neighbours are more likely to work together to resolve their concerns. This may include activities for young people with the aim of diverting them from behaviour that may be anti-social.

EARLY INTERVENTION:

- For incidents of anti-social behaviour which occur outside of office hours, tenants are advised to report criminal behaviour to the PSNI to ensure a prompt response to their concerns, and follow up with Apex staff when they return to the office. Non emergencies should be reported via the PSNI 101 phone line.
- Where appropriate, we encourage all parties to discuss matters informally between themselves and agree a resolution.
- Attempts will be made, if appropriate, to resolve the problem via conciliation as opposed to confrontation and ultimately legal action. Once a case is reported, mediation should be considered and Apex staff should contact the parties involved and arrange to meet with them. Mediation can go ahead with all the parties to the dispute in the same room, or with themediators meeting people separately (shuttle mediation). Mediation permits individuals to discuss their grievances and resolve their own disagreements. It can offer a more positive alternative to legal action. In considering whether mediation is appropriate in a particular case, Apex will consider the seriousness of the anti-social behaviour.
- The Department for Communities encourages housing associations to engage in interagency working to address anti-social behaviour and recognises that the problems faced in some communities are complex. Whilst no single solution can tackle these effectively, equally no single organisation can meet these challenges on its own. Apex is committed to active engagement with relevant authorities such as PSNI, Probation, Health and Social Services, Youth Justice and Education Welfare to provide a comprehensive assessment of an individual's problem behaviour and, where possible, to provide the individual with the opportunity to be referred to an appropriate organisation for support, diversion or another early intervention.
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts - this is a written agreement between Apex and a person who has been involved in anti-social behaviour
- Warning Letters - Use of a warning letter to the individual committing the anti-social behaviour, is considered at an early stage.
- Floating Support - Under the Supporting People Programme which was introduced in Northern Ireland on 1st April 2003, a range of Floating Support services can be provided to vulnerable tenants. Apex provides a Floating Support service to Apex tenants in Derry and Strabane. In other areas, Apex staff can access Floating Support services by contacting NIHE for a list of suitable services. Such services aim to encourage and assist people to live independently and sustain their tenancy, thus preventing a cycle of eviction because of anti-social behaviour.

- Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) – We can refer tenants to the PCSP for home safety checks, and security measures. The PCSP is a statutory body established under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. It brings together, in one partnership, the functions and responsibilities of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), building on the most useful and effective aspects of each, while operating in a more streamlined and joined up way.
- Community Safety Wardens – Within a number of local Council areas, we can request that Community Safety Wardens increase patrols within a specific area. The Wardens can then provide Housing Officers/ASB Intervention & Prevention Officers with written reports of any incidents they observe, or that are reported to them directly by tenants in the areas. The Community Safety Wardens scheme is not designed to replace community policing, but the wardens will offer their support and complement other statutory agencies.

The list of preventative and early intervention measures above is not an exhaustive list of the non-legal options available to the Association, and action will depend on each individual case. The expectation is not that every one of these options will be attempted before progressing to legal action. The course of action in each case will be determined by the severity of the anti-social behaviour, the impact on the victim/s involved, and the genuine belief of whether the action taken by the Association will have the desired response.

Despite these measures, there will be cases of anti-social behaviour which cannot be resolved with early intervention and prevention. In these cases, full investigations will be completed by the Housing Officer/ASB Intervention & Prevention Officer for the case and action will be taken when sufficient evidence is available.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN:

- Warning Letters
- Final Warning Letters
- Notice Seeking Possession
- Transfer List – If a notice seeking possession is sought against a tenant for anti-social behaviour, they will generally not be eligible to access the transfer list
- Withhold Consent to an Exchange of Tenancies - Apex may withhold consent to an exchange of tenancy where the following orders or injunctions in relation to anti-social behaviour are in force or an application for such an order or injunction is pending before any court:
    - A (statutory) injunction against anti-social behaviour;
    - A (non-statutory) injunction against breach of tenancy agreement on grounds relating to anti-social behaviour
    - An Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)
    - An interim ASBO or
    - An order for possession on the grounds of causing nuisance, etc.

  Apex may also withhold consent to an exchange of tenancy where the tenant or proposed assignee or a person residing with either of them has been convicted in connection with an offence which involves the use of the tenant or assignee's home for immoral or illegal purposes, or has been convicted of an indictable crime.

- Disqualification – a tenant guilty of ASB may be nominated for disqualification from the common waiting list and potential future rehousing in event of termination of tenancy.

LEGAL ACTION

If there is sufficient evidence, and in circumstances where we have tried other measures, or where we consider it necessary and proportionate, we may proceed with legal action. The majority of anti-social behaviour cases do not require legal action. We can only consider applying to court if we are confident that the strength of the evidence is such that a court is likely to agree to our request.

- We may apply to the Court for a Possession Order, following the service of a Notice of Seeking Possession on the tenant. In making this decision, we will consider the likelihood of the court deciding to allow us to repossess the property due to the behaviour in question.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are intended to protect people from further acts or conduct that would cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the individual. While Housing Associations in Northern Ireland are not presently empowered to apply to the courts directly for an ASBO, we can apply to the relevant authorities - Housing Executive, local Council and Chief Constable of the PSNI to address anti-social behaviour on our behalf.
- We may apply for an injunction - this is an Order made by the court, requiring an individual to stop their anti-social behaviour and may exclude them from a specific geographical area. If the injunction is granted and the anti-social behaviour continues, the individual may face further legal action and possibly a prison sentence.

We will decide what action to take, having considered the circumstances of each case, and whether the proposed action would be proportionate to the behaviour taking place.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

We will accept reports of anti-social behaviour by any means – phone call, email, letter or in person with a member of Apex staff.

Contact details are as follows:

Apex Housing Association
10 Butcher Street
Derry~Londonderry
BT48 6HL

Apex Housing Association
6 Cromac Place
Belfast
BT7 2JB

Telephone: 02871 304800

Email: info@apex.org.uk

WHO TO CONTACT OUTSIDE OF OFFICE HOURS

Our office hours are between 9am and 5pm.

We acknowledge that a large number of ASB incidents take place outside of normal working hours and at the weekend. In these instances, tenants should ensure that they contact one of the agencies listed below in order for them to investigate the incident, and follow up with the Housing Officer/ASB Intervention & Prevention Officer for their area once our offices reopen.

CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR – Contact PSNI
Emergencies – **999**
Non emergencies – **101**

ASB – YOUTHS IN STREET, NOISE ETC – Contact Community Safety Wardens
Triax Area (Bogside, Brandywell, Fountain Estate, Creggan & Waterside urban) - 07709 457690
Outer North/Outer West Wardens (Shantallow, Galliagh, Ballyarnett, Culmore, Rosemount, Glen, Ballymagroarty, Hazelbank areas) - **07736 213140**
Rural Wardens (Strathfoyle, Eglinton, Claudy, Park, Maydown, Newbuildings) - **07736 213152**

REGIONAL EMERGENCY SOCIAL WORK SERVICE - The regional out of hours social work service provide an emergency social work response across Northern Ireland on an out of hour's basis

This operates at the following times:

- 5pm to 9am weekdays
- 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays.

Wherever you live in Northern Ireland, Out of Hours Social Workers can be contacted through one central telephone number: **Tel: 028 95 049 999**

Emergency Remit
This is an emergency service to be used only when you need a social worker urgently, after hours. The RESWS will provide services for the following groups:

- Children and young people
- Older people
- People with mental health problems
- People with learning difficulties
- People with physical disabilities
- Families and carers of all these groups

TENANT PARTICIPATION

The Department actively encourages tenant engagement in discussing and developing local services, and addressing housing issues generally. By being more involved, tenants will be better informed, contribute to better decision-making, improve services and standards locally, and develop their own skills and opportunities.

To achieve this, the Department for Communities, together with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, funds Supporting Communities NI (SCNI) an independent voluntary organisation to work with community groups and housing providers to achieve meaningful community participation.

Apex Housing Association is committed to tenant participation and actively encourages residents to become involved in their area. The Tenant and Resident Engagement Strategy 2023 – 2026 clearly sets out Apex's objectives with regard to tenant participation. Apex Housing Association have staff dedicated to working in tenant engagement, and to further develop and support frontline staff working with communities.

SUPPORT FOR COMPLAINANTS / WITNESSES

We will ensure that expectations of what the Association can do with regards to anti-social behaviour are managed. Complainants should be advised, at an early stage, if we do not consider the activity or behaviour being reported to be anti-social behaviour. The complainant should be made aware of exactly what the investigative process is, what powers are available to us, and what we can and cannot do with regards to an anti-social tenant.

We will carry out a risk assessment of the situation reported to us. This will include an assessment of the nature of the incidents being reported and their impact on the complainant, taking into account any existing vulnerabilities. The outcome of this risk assessment will determine the urgency and priority we will give to this incident, and therefore the timeframe for our actions.

We believe that keeping complainants and witnesses fully informed about the progress of their anti-social behaviour report is one of the most important principles for effective case management. We will therefore work closely with the complainant during the initial investigation stage to ensure that they are clear on our powers and their responsibilities. We will also explain the likely next steps and involve the complainant, as far as it is possible to do so, in helping to devise an action plan. We will ensure that we are flexible about how we apply our process and procedures based on the individual needs of each complainant.

At the outset, the complainant will be asked to confirm to Apex whether they consent to the details of the complaint being discussed with the alleged perpetrator and also whether they consent to their identity being disclosed to the alleged perpetrator. We will not disclose the complainant's name to the alleged perpetrator without the complainant's permission.

If the problem persists, it may be appropriate to consider taking legal action and in such circumstances the complainant and witnesses may be asked to complete an incident diary which will be provided. Witnesses have a crucial role to play in tackling anti-social behaviour and will require support throughout the process.

If legal action is deemed appropriate the complainant/witness will be advised of all developments in the case and will be kept fully informed of all stages in the legal process. If appropriate their agreement will be sought before proceeding.

We will:

- Initiate and maintain regular contact with complainant/witness(es)
- Explain how the case will be managed
- Provide information – keep the complainant/witness(es) informed of the progress of the case, provide a timetable of the various stages
- Advise them of any new developments, explain the procedures of the court and if appropriate seek their agreement to proceed with their evidence
- Advise them of other agencies – there are a number of other agencies which may be able to offer additional advice and assistance
- Make any necessary arrangements to ensure the complainant/witness(es) attends the court hearing, considering assistance with transport provision if necessary
- Wherever possible, link in with the Victim & Witness Care Group to provide support during the court procedures and investigate the availability of a separate waiting room for the complainant/witness(es) in the court; and

- After legal action – provide on-going witness support if necessary and monitor the situation

EXPERT WITNESSES

We will give careful consideration to the safety of complainants. Where they are not willing to provide direct evidence to the court, we will endeavour to use expert witnesses and hearsay evidence. These expert witnesses may be officers from the statutory agencies, social workers, police officers etc.

If the complainant is not willing to provide direct evidence to the Court, in some cases it may be appropriate for the complainant to swear an affidavit on oath. This sets out their evidence and is relied upon in the Court proceedings without the complainant being present at Court. In such cases, the affidavit would be copied to the perpetrator of the behaviour. If the complainant wishes to remain completely anonymous, we will consider any other evidence that can be relied upon. It is recognised that in such cases, the evidential value of the complaints the complainant has made will be reduced. We will take legal advice on whether the case should proceed in these circumstances and in making a decision as to whether or not to proceed in those circumstances, will take into account the reason why the complainant does not wish to give direct evidence.

SUPPORT FOR PERPETRATORS

We recognise that there are often underlying issues which contribute to the anti-social behaviour. These may include drug or alcohol addictions, family or relationship breakdowns, learning difficulties, or mental health issues to name a few. Individuals whose anti-social behaviour is a consequence of one or more of the issues listed above may sometimes require support in maintaining their tenancies and addressing their behaviour. We, when dealing with vulnerable individuals, will consider the factors which may be contributing to neighbour nuisance before deciding on an appropriate course of action. We will liaise with the individuals and other service providers to identify the availability of appropriate support packages.

Should the perpetrator not engage with any support offered, we will continue to take any legal action we feel necessary to stop the anti-social behaviour.

JUVENILE PERPETRATORS

When dealing with young people we will attempt to ascertain the causes of the anti-social behaviour and involve parents/guardians. Consultations with appropriate agencies will be undertaken i.e. Probation, Youth Justice, Health & Social Services and Education Welfare. In particular, Social Services will be advised of Apex's involvement with any young person participating in anti-social behaviour, given the former's duty under Article 18 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

HATE INCIDENT/CRIME

These are incidents committed against a person or property which are motivated by hostility towards someone based on one of five strands:

- Disability
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Transgender

Hate crime and incidents are recorded on a perception basis; if the complainant, witness or housing association staff member believes that the incident is motivated by one the five strands mentioned above, then it should be treated as a hate incident/crime. Such incidents can include verbal abuse, use of insulting words to cause intimidation, threats of violence, graffiti and targeted damage to property.

SECTARIAN HATE CRIME

Sectarian hate crime is defined as any incident, perceived to have occurred on the basis of the victim's religion or political opinion. The incident may be perceived to be sectarian by the victim or any other person.

Due to the criminal nature of these matters, the victim or witness should be advised to report the matter to the PSNI (if they have not already done so). If the victim/witness is reluctant to do so, the Association will explain that we have a duty to report matters of a criminal nature.

We will treat any hate or sectarian incident as a form of nuisance or annoyance likely to cause alarm or distress, and will investigate reports fully.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is defined as any incident or patterns of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

The Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 extended the grounds for possession to include domestic violence. Apex is empowered to seek possession where a partner has vacated the dwelling house as a result of violence or threats of violence by their partner (the violence or threat of violence could be directed at the partner who has left or at other family members living with that partner).

As in any case of anti-social behaviour, we recognise the need to ensure the safety of the individual experiencing the anti-social behaviour. The decision to return to the family home after an abusive partner has been removed is entirely a matter for the individual concerned.

MULTI AGENCY WORKING

Where possible, we will actively develop multi agency protocols to address anti-social behaviour where appropriate. We will work with statutory, community and voluntary agencies, including NIHE, PSNI, Social Services, Probation Board for Northern Ireland, the Prison Service and any other relevant agency to reduce re-offending and homelessness among offenders by early identification

of the underlying causes that contributes to their re-offending behaviour. We will take all reasonable steps within our power to meet these responsibilities.

The table below details some common examples of neighbour dispute cases. It is not an exhaustive list, but it does show the variety of agencies that can be used to tackle some situations.

	Action by Housing Association / Eviction	**ASBO**	**Action by PSNI**	**Action by Council - Environmental Health Department**
Noise Nuisance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rowdy Behaviour	✓	✓	✓	
Harassment	✓	✓	✓	
Property damage / vandalism	✓	✓	✓	
Unsightly or Rubbish filled garden	✓			✓
Illegal or immoral use	✓	✓	✓	
Unauthorised alterations	✓	✓		✓
Scrap/rubbish accumulation	✓			✓
Keeping Pets	✓			✓
Garden fires	✓	✓	✓	✓

PROTECTION OF STAFF

We will not tolerate any anti-social behaviour directed towards our staff, including contractors, whether this is by our tenant, their household members or visitors, or any person present in our estates. Where these incidents occur, we will work with the Health & Safety Officer to determine the most appropriate course of action.

In keeping with its overall objectives and in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and associated legislation, we recognise and accept our responsibility as an employer for providing a safe and healthy workplace and as far as is reasonably practicable, a risk free working environment for all its employees.

Where employees are required to work outdoors or at locations away from their normal base, we will ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all steps are taken to ensure their safety and health. We will also conduct its activities in a way that minimises and, where possible, eliminates the risk to which others may be exposed. We will take all reasonably practicable steps within its power to meet these responsibilities.

Apex staff members are provided with appropriate training and personal safety awareness. They are also trained on how to deal with difficult situations. Training needs are kept under review.

All anti-social cases are reviewed regularly at one to one meetings with the Senior Housing Officer for advice and guidance.

REVIEW OF POLICY

We will review the effectiveness of this policy at least every three years unless good management practice or changes to legislation dictate that earlier amendment is necessary.

Next Review: August 2026