



Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

1. Aim of policy

This policy sets out the approach we will take in response to actions and/ or behaviours from customers towards staff that are considered unacceptable

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all tenancies and defines:

- The unacceptable customer behaviour that we will not tolerate towards staff and/ or contractors.
- The actions that may be taken if staff/ contractors are faced with unacceptable behaviour

It is important that staff feel empowered to deal appropriately with unacceptable behaviour so that this doesn't have an adverse effect on their ability to carry out their duties or the provision of services to other customers.

All customer facing teams need to be aware of this policy

3. Policy Statement

We understand that sometimes people get angry and staff are trained to deal with challenging situations. There may have been upsetting or distressing circumstances leading up to a customer contacting us and people may act out of character.

However, the actions of some customers who are angry and/ or persistent may result in unreasonable demands upon, or behaviour towards, staff. We will take appropriate action to manage such behaviour which has been grouped under two headings, 'aggressive or abusive behaviour' and 'unreasonable demands'.

4. Policy

4.1 Aggressive or Abusive Behaviour

Aggressive and abusive behaviour is not restricted to acts that may result in physical harm. It includes also, behaviour or language that may cause staff to feel afraid, threatened, distressed or abused.

The following list, which is not exhaustive, contains examples of aggressive/ abusive/ unacceptable behaviour:

- Threats
- Sexual contact or innuendo
- Physical violence
- Personal abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Derogatory or discriminatory remarks based on race, age, religion, disability, gender, sexuality or other
- Rudeness

We also consider inflammatory statements and unsubstantiated allegations to be aggressive behaviour

4.2 Unreasonable Demands

Customers may make what we consider unreasonable demands if they impact substantially on our work through the amount of information they seek or provide, the nature and scale of service they expect, or the frequency of approaches they make.

The following list, which is not exhaustive, contains examples of unreasonable demands:

- Excessive telephone calls, e-mails or letters which are disproportionate to the issue being raised
- Refusing to speak with, or allowing appropriate members of staff to deliver services, without providing sufficient evidence or justification. This could include seeking to escalate to more senior staff or seeking to discriminate against staff based on gender/ race etc.
- Demanding to speak to particular staff, who are not responsible for areas of queries
- Unrealistic expectations for responses which are disproportionate to the issues being raised
- Persistent refusal to accept what services we can and cannot provide
- Repeatedly changing the substance of a complaint or raising unrelated concerns
- Persistent refusal to accept a decision made by us by continually pursuing a case or requesting multiple complaint investigations without presenting any new information

Any of these may be considered unacceptable and unreasonable, in isolation or collectively, if they start to impact substantially on our capacity, by adversely affecting staff's ability to carry out their duties or in providing services to other customers.

4.3 Managing behaviour

How unacceptable behaviour is managed, will depend on the nature and extent of it. Any staff member faced with unacceptable behaviour may ask their line manager to approve a decision to take one or more of the following steps:

- Restricting contact in person, by telephone, letter or electronically or by any combination of these
- Reporting extreme behaviour to the police, getting people removed from our premises where necessary
- Restricting the frequency of contact
- Contact by appointment only
- Designated member of staff only to be contacted
- Replies to contact by designated member of staff – only at agreed times and/ or frequency
- Limit number and range of issues in a given period
- Action for breach of tenancy or lease agreement
- Taking other reasonable steps not listed here.

Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and will demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. For example, we would assess a customer's needs using the information on our housing management system, vulnerability markers or support in place.

The customer will be informed of which of the steps are being taken, the reasons why and the length of time it will be in place.

Information on the arrangement will be added to the customer's account to enable all relevant staff to manage ongoing contact to best suit the business and customer's needs.

This will normally be for a year when it will be reviewed by the line manager together with any 'Visit In Pairs' status which will normally be attached to any of the above actions.

4.4 Appeals

A customer can appeal a decision that has been made and the decision will be reviewed at our discretion, or if the customer presents new evidence for consideration to Head of Service.

5. Statutory Requirements

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety Regulation 1999
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010

6. Related Policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

7. Monitor and Review Process

Any reports from staff will be considered and action taken on accordance with this policy.
Any issues will be discussed with staff via team meetings and 1:1s.
This policy will be approved by the Executive and reviewed every three years.

Author	Owner	Date approved	Review date
Derek Streek	Head of Communities, Standards and Partnerships	October 2022	October 2023