

1. INTRODUCTION

Coastal Housing Group ('CHG') aspires to enable residents to live good lives in confident communities. Our community development work and the way we support residents is designed to meet these objectives, predicated on understanding what matters to an individual and what's strong in communities. We recognise there are times when these aspirations are impacted by issues such as anti-social behavior (ASB) and therefore, we frame ASB as 'failure demand' in the good life system.

This policy sets when and how CHG, will intervene in cases of ASB. CHG is committed to a restorative approach, both in terms of using restorative techniques to build and maintain relationships between individuals, schemes and wider communities, and in using restorative interventions to acknowledge the harm caused by ASB, share the impact this has had and facilitate repair of relationships through mutual agreements. Reconciliation of conflict is essential to support healthy relationships between neighbours and communities and is our central offer to cases of ASB reported to us. Housing staff are trained in restorative practice and supported by trained managers and experts.

We are clear on the types of cases in which CHG can get involved, the types of cases in which we cannot, and, where we can get involved how we will do so.

This policy is owned and administered by the Head of Community Housing, ('HoCH'). The effectiveness of the policy and provision of training will be reviewed annually by the HoCH. This exercise will ensure that the policy is up to date and remains relevant to CHG's needs.

"Anti-social behaviour covers a broad spectrum... It can cause minor irritation or can be utterly devastating. Whilst anti-social behaviour is not just a housing issue, it is clear that the housing sector has an important role to play in preventing and responding to it. Indeed, in many cases social landlords have taken the lead on tackling anti-social behaviour in their communities. There are many examples of good practice within the sector. Much anti-social behaviour is not criminal in its nature, but this type of behaviour does undermine people's confidence that crime is being tackled and fuels a fear of crime."

Welsh Government

2. PURPOSE

This policy aims to assist residents to live a life free from ASB and nuisance. We are committed to a restorative approach to building and maintaining relationships between neighbours and communities, and in repairing relationships where necessary. This purpose was refreshed in 2022 following feedback from residents about what mattered to them.

3. PRINCIPLES

When delivering this policy, CHG will: -

- take a restorative approach to building, maintaining, and repairing relationships
- support victims, witnesses and, where appropriate vulnerable perpetrators
- listen and understand what the issue is
- keep people up to date throughout
- manage expectations by providing realistic information
- support people to take ownership/responsibility of the issue (where possible)
- promote partnerships and work with partner agencies to pull in their expertise
- pull in internal CHG teams (e.g. caretakers) where possible
- be pro-active in engaging communities and be visible in the community
- be aware of safety considerations at all times
- keep up to date with changing legislation

4. WHAT MATTERS

We asked residents what mattered to them. Residents want to: -

- feel safe inside and outside of my home - both me and my visitors
- enjoy peace and quiet
- be kept informed if I've raised concerns and for staff to be proactive
- have respectful neighbours
- have a healthy quality of life

5. DEFINITION OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

CHG adopts the definition of ASB as set out in the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014, that is:

- (a) conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,
- (b) conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or
- (c) conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Examples of this conduct include, but are not limited to,:

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| Drug related offences from a property or within the locality | Violence or threats of violence | Damage to property, including graffiti and vandalism | Harassment and victimisation |
| Hate incidents and prejudice motivated ASB | Verbal abuse | Noise nuisance | Littering, fly-tipping, rubbish dumping and misuse of communal areas |
| Nuisance from vehicles | Nuisance from animals | | |

Hate Incidents / Prejudice Motivated ASB

CHG defines hate incidents / prejudice motivated ASB (PMASB) as conduct that is motivated by an intolerance or prejudice towards a person or group of peoples’ protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or the protected characteristics of a person closely associated with them. In these circumstances, it does not matter whether the protected characteristics are present in the particular case - only that it is perceived to be so.

Cases aggravated by prejudice will be treated as a priority.

6. CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN CHG WILL GET INVOLVED

CHG will implement this policy when ASB is carried by a resident(s), a member of the resident(s)’s household and/or visitors. It does not matter who the ASB is directed towards and includes towards our staff, agents and/or contractors. Each case will be dealt with according to its circumstances.

Where an alleged perpetrator is not a CHG resident, we will work closely with the police and local authority to reach an appropriate outcome.

We will assist owner-occupiers or private tenants where the alleged perpetrator is a CHG resident.

7. CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN CHG WILL NOT GET INVOLVED

Individual perceptions of ASB can include a wide variety of activities. The following are examples of the types of everyday living that would not, under normal circumstances, be considered to constitute ASB and will not, therefore, be investigated under the terms of this policy.

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|-------------------------------|--|---|------------------|
| Mowing of lawns | Vacuuming / noise from domestic appliances | Smells (unless relating to drug activity) | Children playing |
| Walking across a wooden floor | Low level animal nuisance (e.g. cats entering gardens) | Lifestyle clashes | |

We will work with residents reporting these types of issue to manage expectations and to suggest alternative methods of resolution.

8. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM CHG

CHG will review every ASB report received. Consideration will be given to the context of the report, whether it is the first time an incident has been reported, or whether it the latest in a series of ongoing reports.

Vulnerability and risk will be key to determining the most effective and proportionate response and CHG may use the risk assessment matrix at Appendix A to assess the real impact of ASB (which is not always the same as the assumed impact). This will help to ensure

that those affected by ASB get the required support. Any suggested action to be taken will be discussed with the victim/witness and the options available and likely outcomes explained.

Our primary offer is to facilitate a restorative intervention, supporting the victim, witnesses, and perpetrators to engage in a supportive, safe conversation to reach a mutually agreeable solution.

CHG will make full use of the range of enforcement measures and legal options available to effectively address ASB, however we will not move victims, witnesses or perpetrators as a means of resolving ASB; we will deal with the ASB. The only exception to this is in very extreme situations, where there are fears for resident safety. The recommendations and assistance of statutory agencies will be required in considering such a move.

A preferred method of ongoing communication will be established from the outset with residents reporting ASB. Once received, the victim/witness will be provided with a single point of contact, usually the CHO for the area. The CHO will be responsible for managing the case, establishing the facts, and determining whether the matter is actionable. The CHO will keep victims and witnesses updated proactively. CHG will ensure that residents have access to interpreters and signers and use appropriate formats of communication for anyone who has difficulty reading or writing.

9. SUPPORTING VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

CHG will take a trauma informed, victim led and proportionate approach to managing ASB and will, where possible and appropriate, work with the police and other agencies to address issues. This will ensure that the physical, psychological, and emotional impact of ASB on those affected is always considered and factored into how cases are managed.

Victims will be advised of the support services that we and other agencies such as the police, Victim Support, Citizens Advice, and mediation can provide, and make referrals as required.

Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained and will always seek the victim or witnesses' permission before contacting the alleged perpetrator, legal representatives or any other agencies.

If court action is taken we will:

- provide transport to court for witnesses, pay expenses for refreshments, childcare and any other reasonable costs, where these are needed to facilitate the attendance at court of the witness
- arrange for an accompanied visit to court, prior to attendance, to familiarise witnesses with the court environment and proceedings.
- work with support agencies when a complaint of ASB is made against an alleged perpetrator who is vulnerable, with the intention of encouraging a positive change in their behaviour.

CHG will make residents aware of the Community Trigger process and their right to make a community trigger application and will act as an advocate in supporting residents to take an application forward to the relevant authority where appropriate for us to do so.

We aim to create a climate where people feel confident in coming forward with information, but should victims or witnesses wish to remain anonymous we will still investigate reports. Residents will be made aware, though, that by remaining anonymous, the types of action that we are able to take may be limited.

10. SUPPORTING VULNERABLE PERPETRATORS

CHG will consider whether the perpetrator may benefit from help and support from relevant support agencies and make such referrals as considered appropriate taking vulnerability into account.

Where ASB perpetrators are juveniles, we will attempt to work with other partner agencies and parents to manage the ASB. Early intervention and prevention will be the preferred option, but legal action will be taken where necessary.

11. PROACTIVE ACTIVITY

Our Tenancy Agreements are clear about prohibiting nuisance and ASB and this is clearly explained to residents at sign up of their tenancy.

We will work in partnership with others to engage residents in activities aimed at reducing ASB.

12. LEGISLATION / REGULATION

This policy takes into account the requirements of:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Housing Wales Act 2014
- Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 1996, 2004

and the requirements of the Welsh Government's Regulatory Framework: -

- RS3 - high quality services are delivered to tenants. The social landlord keeps tenants safe in their homes, delivers services which meet the diverse needs of tenants and achieves and maintains high levels of tenant satisfaction with services.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

CHG is committed to equal opportunities and this policy will be operated fairly and equally. CHG will not discriminate, harass or victimise any victim, witness, alleged perpetrator or other interested party on the grounds of any protected characteristic(s).

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are:

| | | |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Age | Pregnancy / Maternity | Sex |
| Race | Sexual Orientation | Gender Reassignment |
| Disability | Religion of Belief | Marriage /Civil Partnership |

CHG must, in the exercise of its housing management functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

This includes the need to:

- (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
 - (iii) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This includes the need to:

- (i) tackle prejudice, and
- (ii) promote understanding.

We are not a public authority, but we do exercise public functions when we allocate and manage social housing. This means that we must have regard to the matters mentioned above.

Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

14. DATA PROTECTION

CHG operates a specific Data Protection Policy which governs how the organisation will manage the collection, retention, processing, management and disposal of individual's personal data and special category data. The policy is designed to incorporate the legal requirements contained in Data Protection Act 2018, the GDPR, and guidance and best practice issued by the Information Commissioners Office.

When dealing with information relating to ASB, CHG will be careful to differentiate between what information it is able to use and share in investigations and that which it is not.

15. WELSH LANGUAGE

CHG appreciates that residents can express their opinions and needs better in their chosen language. We will ensure that services are available through the medium of Welsh if requested, are of a high quality, and provided in a timely manner.

16. MEASURES, LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

The basis of all learning and study is quality data and CHG commits to keeping proportionate, purposeful, person-centered ASB records. We strive to produce leading measures that study how we are performing to purpose (e.g. 'a life free of ASB' and 'building restorative communities') and lagging measures (e.g. satisfaction with response and time taken to resolve).

Measures are captured to understand specific details relating to ASB (e.g. location, type, etc.) and these are regularly reviewed both in teams and at management level. This data assists us to identify hotspots, design interventions and identify partners (internal and external) to work collaboratively with. Cases of ASB are reviewed, using a reflective practice 'fishbowl' approach, on a regular basis. These exercises are undertaken in teams to share examples and invite reflection from colleagues to assist with sharing good practice, designing interventions and improving how we work.

17. COMPLAINTS

Complaints regarding any aspect of how CHG has responded to ASB reports can be made through the company's complaints process by contacting Coastal by telephone, email, live chat, visit or by letter.