



Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2009 to 2012

July 2009

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1. Foreword

North Lincolnshire Homes takes anti-social behaviour very seriously. We recognise that anti-social behaviour can affect the physical and mental wellbeing of residents and undermine community cohesion. It can also damage the sustainability of communities and the reputation of neighbourhoods.

Since the stock transfer in April 2007, we have worked closely with our residents, the Council, the Police and voluntary agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour where it is present. We have also invested in initiatives to prevent and minimise anti-social behaviour.

This is our first Anti-social Behaviour Strategy where we are setting out our strategic objectives and longer term plans for preventing and managing anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods.

Andy Orrey
Acting Chief Executive

2. Introduction

Tackling anti-social behaviour is a key Government priority and, under the Respect Agenda, there is a clear expectation that social landlords will use the powers available to them to respond to their local issues effectively. The Government's Respect Standard for Housing Management aims to promote good practice among landlords in order to improve the quality of life for residents. Social landlords are also required publish a summary of their policy and procedure for dealing with anti-social behaviour.

There is a Regulatory requirement for social landlords to have strategies in place to deal with anti-social behaviour. The Tenant Service Authority also requires social landlords to regularly review their policies and procedures.

In the Offer Document, North Lincolnshire Homes gave commitments to tenants that it would set up a specialist team to deal with serious cases of anti-social behaviour, work with other agencies to tackle neighbourhood issues, identify tenancy support needs and set service standards in respect of anti-social behaviour management.

The aim of the strategy is to identify our priority objectives in respect of anti-social behaviour and sets out a plan of actions to deal with these issues.

3. Vision

Our vision is to be at the heart of our neighbourhoods, working with communities. We want to develop neighbourhoods which residents are proud of and enjoy living in and to build communities in which individuals flourish and treat each other with respect and dignity.

4. Strategic Objectives

North Lincolnshire Homes has six Corporate Objectives, which are central to achieving our vision and maintaining our values. These Corporate Objectives shape our strategy and policy development, service delivery and business management. They are:

- 1. Deliver excellent services and Decent Homes**
- 2. Work in partnership for sustainable communities**
- 3. Put customers at the heart of our business.**
- 4. Develop the organisation and build capacity**
- 5. Manage the business effectively and efficiently**
- 6. Remain viable through regulation and risk management**

5. What is North Lincolnshire like?

North Lincolnshire is situated on the south side of the Humber estuary and covers an area of 85,000 hectares of which 89% is agricultural land. The overall population is approximately 157,050. The patterns of settlement reflect its mainly rural nature with market towns surrounded by many small villages. The main urban centre is the town of Scunthorpe which has a population of approximately 69,000. Scunthorpe has been designated as an Urban Renaissance town and is famous for its steelworks, which is still a major employer in the area despite the decline of the steel industry. Whilst Scunthorpe is the main centre for jobs, shopping and further education, the agricultural heritage of the County lead to the development of 6 market towns. Epworth and Crowle serve the Isle of Axholm and Barton, Brigg, Kirton in Lindsey and Winterton serve their neighbouring rural areas. The M180 motorway runs east to west through the County providing good road transport links in and out of the area.

Between 2001 and 2006, the population of North Lincolnshire increased by an estimated 4%. From an overall population of 157,000 over 38,000 are children and young people. Black and minority ethnic (BME) people make up about 3.95% of the population overall but some areas such as Crosby in Scunthorpe, have a significantly higher proportion. The main ethnic minority groups are of Asian or Asian British heritage but the Iraqi Kurdish community is increasing. Since 2001, the proportion of Eastern European workers has also been increasing.

Unemployment rates have generally been lower than the national average. However, unemployment has risen during the recession.

6. Scene Setting

Our strategies and priorities are shaped by national, regional and local context and contribute to these wider agendas:

National Context

North Lincolnshire Homes has signed up to the Government's Respect Standard for Housing Management. This is a voluntary standard, which aims to promote best practice among social landlords in tackling anti-social behavior and building a culture of respect in communities.

There are six core commitments in the Standard:

1. Accountability, leadership and commitment
2. Empowering and reassuring residents
3. Prevention and early intervention
4. Tailored services to residents and provision of support for victims and witnesses
5. Protecting communities through swift enforcement
6. Support to tackle the causes of anti-social behavior

The Tenant Services Authority supports Government priorities through the regulatory framework and requires social landlords to have strategies in place to tackle anti-social behavior, to review their policy and procedures regularly and to publish summaries of their policy and procedure.

The Audit Commission assesses the performance of landlords in tackling anti-social behaviour against Key Line of Enquiry 6 on Tenancy and Estate Management.

Regional Context

The Police and Local Authorities have a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act to work together and with other stakeholders to implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder. The Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership is the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership for North Lincolnshire, bringing together the emergency services, local authority and other public and private sector agencies to reduce crime and disorder in the County.

On behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership, Safer Neighbourhoods is responsible for the delivery of the Safer and Stronger Communities element of the area's Sustainable Community Strategy. The partnership's performance is measured against a series of targets agreed with central government and detailed in a number of documents, including the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

In practical terms it:

- Collates information from the Police, Local Authority, Health Service and a broad range of other sources about crime, disorder and substance misuse in North Lincolnshire
- Conducts surveys of local residents
- Analyses the information collected to make sure that the Partnership's perception of crime reflects public views as well as recorded statistics. Much of this process is undertaken using a system known as the 'National Intelligence Model'
- Devises and implements a rolling three year plan that contains measures to tackle those priority issues identified

Anti-social behaviour is a priority of the Local Strategic Partnership and is a priority performance indicator in the Local Area Agreement (NI 21 – dealing with concerns about asb and crime by the local council and police).

North Lincolnshire Homes has a Service Level Agreement with Humberside Police and North Lincolnshire Council. It sets out the responsibilities of each partner organisation in respect of tackling and monitoring anti-social behavior.

We are also an active member of the Lincolnshire Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPP) alongside the Police, Probation Service, Social Services, Education, Health Service and other social landlords. The aim of the Panel is to identify people who present a risk to the public and to manage those risks through supervision and support.

Local Context

Before the stock transfer in 2007, residents had clearly voiced concerns about anti-social behavior in their neighbourhoods, and the safety and environment of their estates. Within the offer document, North Lincolnshire Homes gave specific commitments in response to these concerns:

1. Invest £15million in estates and environmental works during the first 5 years after transfer
2. Carry out community safety works such as the closure of rat runs, providing gates and fencing programmes and improved lighting and secure communal entrance systems
3. Estate works such as providing car parking and improving footpaths
4. Environmental and landscaping works to improve neighbourhoods
5. Set up a specialist team to deal with anti-social behaviour
6. Use full powers to deal with problems

In November 2008, NLH commissioned a Mock Inspection of housing service which was carried out by Baildon Dean Tambe Consultants. Several recommendations were made relating to the management of anti-social behaviour including undertaking an audit against the Respect Standard, improving the database, improving communication with complainants and reviewing the caseload and performance of Housing Officers.

An audit against the Respect Standard was carried out in June 2009 and the main gaps identified included:

- Lack of strategic direction
- Improvement needed to performance management and reporting
- Insufficient accountability to and empowerment of residents
- Insufficient activity in the prevention of anti-social behaviour

The issues identified have been incorporated into this strategy and the revised Policy and Procedure, and translated into actions in the Action Plan attached to this Strategy.

7. Where we are now

Anti-social behaviour is clearly an issue of concern to North Lincolnshire residents. In 2008, Humberside Police carried out a public survey which found that anti-social behaviour was the top concern of respondents. Further, it found that the public perception was that anti-social behaviour problems were worsening and that the two main issues were teenagers hanging around the streets and vandalism, graffiti and damage to property.

In their Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2007/08, the Safer Neighbourhood Partnership identified that incidents reported to the Police rose by 9% over the previous year and that most complaints involved young people. It also found that the peak season for anti-social behaviour was Autumn driven by a high number of incidents around Halloween and Mischief Night, that the peak days were Friday and Saturday and that peak times were 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.

In 2008/09, North Lincolnshire Homes dealt with over a thousand complaints of anti-social behaviour. The most common problems reported were noise nuisance, verbal abuse and garden nuisance. The results of our STATUS Tenant Satisfaction Survey in 2008 also showed that these issues were important neighbourhood issues for residents in addition to car parking, disruptive children, vandalism and drug use. An analysis of our waiting list showed that 16% of transfer applicants gave their reason for wanting to move as neighbour problems or harassment.

8. Where we want to be

In order to **deliver excellent services and Decent Homes**, we will:

- ✓ Provide a service which users are satisfied with and which is accessible to all customers
- ✓ Be clear about the standards of behaviour expected and encourage good behaviour among residents
- ✓ Give communities confidence to report problems to us and empower them to challenge inappropriate behaviour
- ✓ Carry out environmental improvements to improve the safety of estates e.g. gates and fencing, parking spaces, footpath and lighting improvements

- ✓ Remove graffiti, fly tipping and litter, and repair vandalism quickly to minimise the impact on neighbourhoods

In order to **work in partnership for sustainable communities**, we will:

- ✓ Work with other agencies including the Police, the Council and community groups to share information and best practice, and to jointly respond to issues
- ✓ Take action to prevent anti-social behavior and intervene early to prevent problems escalating
- ✓ Promote a positive image of our neighbourhoods and challenge unfair negative publicity where it arises
- ✓ Use our full range of powers to tackle anti-social behaviour
- ✓ Ensure support is provided to those who need help to sustain their tenancies

In order to **put customers at the heart of our business**, we will:

- ✓ Consult with customers to ensure that our policy and procedures meet their needs and expectations
- ✓ Ensure our policies and procedures are readily available to customers and agree specific standards for service delivery with them
- ✓ Continue to carry out estate walkabouts with residents as a tool to build relationships, share information and highlight local issues
- ✓ Support complainants and keep them regularly informed of progress in their case
- ✓ Engage young people and invest in diversionary activities and prevention initiatives

In order to **develop the organisation and build capacity**, we will:

- ✓ Employ specialist staff to deal with serious cases and provide training to all front line staff who deal with anti-social behaviour
- ✓ Ensure that we have the best legal advice to enable us to take the most appropriate course of action and achieve value for money in legal action

In order to **manage the business effectively and efficiently**, we will:

- ✓ Set challenging performance targets for dealing with anti-social behaviour and monitor performance to make sure these are achieved
- ✓ Put in place effective policies and procedures to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour and review them regularly

In order to **remain viable through regulation and risk management**, we will:

- ✓ Meet our regulatory responsibilities and comply with the Government's Respect Standard for housing management

9. Value for Money

We are committed to delivering excellent services that are value for money and to making the best possible use of our resources. We have a separate Value for Money Strategy that sets out our overall priorities and plans for improvement. We will ensure that our Anti-social behaviour strategy delivers value for money to customers and the business and contributes toward the achievement of our overall Value for Money Strategy by:

- ✓ Analysing the costs and benefits of actions taken and case management
- ✓ Targeting resources to maximise the cost effectiveness of the service
- ✓ Benchmarking our costs with those of other providers

10. Equality and Diversity

We aim to ensure that all customers have equal access to our anti-social behaviour service and that the service is tailored to meet the diverse needs of our customers. To support this aim, we:

- ✓ Provide information about the service in a variety of formats and languages
- ✓ Provide a wide range of methods to enable customers to report anti-social behaviour
- ✓ Tailor investigation and evidence gathering to meet the needs and abilities of individual complainants
- ✓ Recognise support needs of individual complainants and alleged perpetrators
- ✓ Apply the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act and other legislation where anti-social behaviour is found to be due to a person's disability, mental health or drug or alcohol abuse

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out during the development of this policy and as a result of the findings we will:

- ✓ Produce a separate Harassment Policy
- ✓ Train front line staff to recognise harassment and respond appropriately to harassment
- ✓ Promote ASB and harassment services better

11. Performance – How do we know if it works?

Performance will be monitored in relation to the following activities:

- The number of Anti-social Behaviour, harassment and hate crime reports received
- The diversity profile of people reporting anti-social behaviour, harassment and hate crime
- The number and types of actions taken against perpetrators
- Achievement against specified response times and service standards

- Customer satisfaction levels on closed cases
- Reasons for tenancy terminations and transfer applications
- The number of permanent and temporary transfers arising from anti-social behaviour, harassment and hate crime
- Tenant satisfaction with their neighbourhood as a place to live

12. Links to Other Strategies

This Anti-social Behaviour Strategy links to our:

- Corporate Plan
- Community Cohesion Strategy
- Value for Money Strategy
- Asset Management Plan
- Vulnerable Persons Strategy

13. The Contact Section

For further information about this Strategy, please contact:

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ASB Action Plan 2009/2011

Action	Desired Outcomes	Target Completion Date	Lead Officer	Status Progress
Introduce Good Neighbour Agreements at the Westcliffe and Southfield Road Estates	Good behaviour will be encouraged and NLH expectations clarified	Dec 09	Clare Coyle	
Integrate a criteria relating to asb in the tenant incentive scheme	Good behaviour will be encouraged and NLH expectations clarified	March 10	Steve Hepworth	
Explain behaviour requirements as part of sign up procedure	Good behaviour will be encouraged and NLH expectations clarified	Sept 09	Steve Evans	
Involve Police in drawing up specifications for environmental improvements of estates	Safety concerns will be addressed through physical changes in the environment	Jan 10	Steve Evans	Done for communal areas. Wider improvements to follow
Carry out an Equality Impact Assessment on the ASB service	Ensure that service is accessible and non discriminatory	20 Aug 2009	Jane Crookes	Complete
Develop further tenancy support initiatives	Change behaviour of perpetrators and support sustainability of tenancies	March 10	Fran Rhodes	
Provide training for front line staff relating to ASB management but also customer care and data protection	Ensure staff are aware of legislation and good practice, understand the requirements of policy and company expectations	Jan 10	Clare Coyle	With HR
Produce a good practice guide for staff and customer reference including preventing evictions	Ensure staff aware of good practice and that there is a consistent approach. To ensure that customers understand what service to expect	Dec 09	Clare Coyle	
Develop prevention/distraction initiatives for Friday and Saturday evenings	To prevent anti-social behaviour	Dec 09	Fran Rhodes	With Chris Baker
Review Policy and Procedure in consultation with service users	To improve service delivery and performance and ensure the service meets the expectations of users	Sept 09	Jane Crookes	Part complete
Offer training to residents on tackling anti-social behaviour	Empower residents to challenge unacceptable behaviour in their neighbourhoods	March 10	Clare Coyle	CV training done 2008. Refresher training to take place
Review Service Standards in consultation with service users	Service Standards meet customer expectations	December 2009	Lynn Marriott & Claire Coyle	

Action	Desired outcomes	Target Completion Date	Lead officer	
Review ASB procedures including how cases are allocated to the ASB team	Cases are dealt with consistently and in the most effective way to resolve quickly	Sept 09	Jane Crookes	
Analyse the costs and benefits for the ASB service and benchmark with others	Service demonstrates value for money	Dec 09	Claire Coyle	
Report performance and issues affecting ASB service to Operations Committee on a bi-annual basis	Officers are accountable for service delivery and performance is scrutinised	Ongoing	Claire Coyle	
Review provision of out of hours reporting	Customers have access to advice and information outside of normal working hours	Nov 09	Lynn Marriott	