



ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

KARIN HOUSING ASSOCIATION

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (Section 12) requires Housing Associations to publish policies and procedures on how to tackle anti-social behaviour in line with guidance issued by the Housing Corporation.

1.2 Karin Housing Association Ltd. (Karin) recognises that anti-social behaviour can cause disruption and stress, not only to individuals, but to whole communities. How effectively we deal with anti-social behaviour is becoming increasingly important to our customers.

1.3 Karin's Business Plan Objective 1 states that we will,

“provide cost effective, good quality, customer focused and responsive housing management services which meet the needs and expectations of tenants and applicants and maintain efficiency of the business.”

1.4 Anti-social behaviour has been defined as follows:

“conduct which is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person and directly or indirectly relates to or affects the housing management functions of a relevant landlord”.

(Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)

Karin accepts this definition.

1.5 Specific examples of anti-social behaviour may include (but not be restricted to):-

- Excessive and persistent noise nuisance
- Threatening language or behaviour
- Actual violence
- Illegal supply of drugs
- Car crime
- Racial and other harassment
- Arson and vandalism and graffiti.
- Intimidation and harassment such as racial harassment.

- 1.6 There is no prescriptive approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and each case will be dealt with according to the individual circumstances and in a way appropriate to the circumstances of the case.

2 Key Commitments

2.1 Responsibilities

- 2.1.1 Housing Officers are responsible for dealing with matters of anti-social behaviour on a day-to-day basis.
- 2.1.2 The Housing Manager will be responsible for providing support and advice to Housing Officers on individual cases and ensure that effective and prompt action is taken.
- 2.1.3 The Customer Services Director has overall responsibility for monitoring anti-social behaviour and will report all cases to the Board of Management on a quarterly basis.
- 2.1.4 The Customer Services Director is also responsible for ensuring that all Housing Services staff are adequately trained in dealing with anti-social behaviour, as identified during induction programmes, monthly supervision sessions and appraisals with the Housing Manager.

2.2 General principles

- 2.2.1 In the first instance, individuals will be encouraged to resolve the problem for themselves, where appropriate.
- 2.2.2 A report of anti-social behaviour can be made in whichever way is convenient to the complainant. This will include complaints made on an individual's behalf. Translation and interpreting services will be provided in circumstances where English is not the first language of either party, where this presents a difficulty.
- 2.2.3 Vulnerable tenants will be supported, either directly by Karin staff or by referral to the appropriate agency. If the perpetrator is vulnerable then support will also be sought for them if appropriate.
- 2.2.4 If either party is not satisfied by the way the association is dealing with the matter then they have the right to proceed through the Complaints Policy.
- 2.2.5 Karin will ensure that tenants are kept informed about action taken and the outcomes. Realistic timetables for action and outcomes will be given and options for action discussed.

- 2.2.6 Karin will ensure the confidentiality of the complainant as requested, except in cases where there are issues of child protection or criminal matters. These will be discussed in full with the complainant. Use will be made of the Information Exchange protocol as agreed with Avon and Somerset Police.
- 2.2.6 The implications of anti-social behaviour and breaches of the tenancy agreement will be discussed at the sign up for each new tenancy and any support needs will be identified in order to ensure sufficient support is provided to enable tenants to sustain their tenancies.
- 2.2.7 A range of solutions will be considered in agreement with the complainant and explored in response to reports of anti-social behaviour including:-
- Mediation
 - Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
 - Parental Control Orders
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Orders
 - Injunctions and warning interview
 - Referral to Environmental Health
 - Demoted tenancies
 - Possession Proceedings including section 21 notice

Possessions proceedings will be considered in the most serious cases where other solutions are either not appropriate or have not proved successful. However, it is recognised that possession proceedings do not resolve the anti-social behaviour but can displace it elsewhere.

- 2.2.8 Karin will work in partnership with other agencies including the police and appropriate local authority departments (e.g. Community Safety Teams, Youth Offending Teams, Social Services, Mental Health Services) to tackle anti-social behaviour. We will also ensure our involvement in any local partnerships dealing with anti-social behaviour established in the areas where we operate.
- 2.2.9 Witnesses and complainants will be supported should legal action be taken in line with Karin's Policy on support for complainants.
- 2.2.9 If appropriate, Karin will implement the Racial Harassment Policy or Domestic Violence Policy in conjunction with this policy.

2.3 Response

- 2.3.1 Reports of anti-social behaviour will be acknowledged quickly and formally either by phone or in writing (specific response times are outlined in the Anti-Social Behaviour Procedures).

- 2.3.2 Home visits will be arranged where the complainant requests this and where the matter is particularly serious. Meetings will also be held at other locations as appropriate to the individual case.
- 2.2.3 Housing Officers will monitor their cases of Anti-Social Behaviour regularly
- 2.3.4 No case will be closed without the complainant being notified in writing with full reasons for this decision being specified.
- 2.4 Summary
 - 2.4.1 Karin accepts that everyone has the right to their chosen lifestyle providing this does not affect the quality of life of their neighbours or the communities in which they live. This means being tolerant, accepting and respecting the needs and choices of other people.
 - 2.4.2 However, we are committed to tackling the problems caused by anti-social behaviour and acknowledge that we must be effective and decisive in the action that we take.

Common/Policies & procedures/Housing Services/ ASB Policy (Nov 06)

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