

Midlands Rural Housing

Scheme and Community Management Policy

This policy is implemented by Midlands Rural Housing on behalf of four independent partner associations: Leicestershire Rural Housing Association, Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association, Peak District Rural Housing Association and Warwickshire Rural Housing Association. Midlands Rural Housing provides the full range of housing and management services for these four associations in line with a procedure agreement.

Document Title	Scheme and Community Management Policy
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Author Title & Issuing Department	Housing Services Manager
Target Audience	All Midlands Rural colleagues, website

Approved By	Richard Mugglestone
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Review Date	March 2029

Links to Regulatory Standards – Economic / Consumer Standards	Safety and Quality Standard: Ensuring safe communal areas Neighbourhood and Community Standard: co-operating with partners to promote social and environmental wellbeing; ensuring the safety of communal spaces
Outcomes for Customers	The Policy will set out the actions that emh takes to promote community cohesion and effective neighbourhood management
How were tenants, residents and service users involved in the review/development of this document	Customer Consultation took place. Customer Reader Panel 28/11/25 as part of emh group Resident Influencing Committee 23/01/26 as part of emh group ELT member March 2026 as part of emh group
Training Provision	Heads of Service across the business will be responsible for cascading the policy to their teams ensuring all colleagues understand and adopt the principles of the policy.
Links to the Business Plan	
Links to Key Values	Clarity: sets out clearly how emh will manage estates and promote community cohesion. Accountability: makes clear what is our responsibility, what lies with tenants and with other third parties.

Version control

Version	Revision date	Author: Job title	Change description
	April		New policy document format. Incorporates Estate Management Policy.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. We want our residents to live in good quality homes and neighbourhoods where they feel safe, proud, empowered, and enabled to make decisions that will improve the communities in which they live. This policy sets out how we will manage our estates in partnership with our residents with a focus on listening to and acting on resident feedback.
- 1.2. We aim to promote sustainable communities and foster good relationships between our customers through the provision of guidance and support.
- 1.3. The policy assists the housing team in dealing with contacts around noise, nuisance and tenancy concerns. It is based on the recommendations made in the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Report 'Time to be Heard.' A procedures document sets out our approach to specific types of nuisance.

The purpose of the policy

- 1.4. The purpose of our approach is to build relationships, confidence, and trust to help promote community cohesion.
- 1.5. We take a proactive and a reactive approach to neighbourhood management. This can be both community based and responding to individual concerns.
- 1.6. This policy provides a framework for dealing sensitively and proportionally with behaviours which are not necessarily defined as anti-social behaviour, hate crimes or domestic abuse and therefore unlikely to be a tenancy breach, that require a different response from us as a landlord. Matters dealt with under this policy will likely involve situations that have arisen because of circumstance, rather than a genuine intention to cause someone else harm. The Scheme and Community Management Policy, procedures and toolkit will help us deliver this policy.

Why the Association is issuing the policy

- 1.7. The association is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing and one of the key requirements we must meet is the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. This is measured through the tenant satisfaction measures.
- 1.8. This document supports how we meet this standard and in particular sets out how we:
 - Work co-operatively with customers, other landlords and relevant organisations to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces
 - Co-operate with relevant partners to promote social environmental and economic wellbeing of resident.

Relevant legislation

- Housing Acts 1988 and 1996
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Equality Act 2010
- Environmental Protection Act 1990

2. Definitions and scope

Neighbourhood management

- 2.1. Effective neighbourhood management includes tenancy management and environmental management which are linked to but separate from the management of anti-social behaviour and tenancy sustainment services. Our Anti-social Behaviour Policy sets out how we deal with anti-social behaviour.

Behaviours not categorised as anti-social behaviour

- 2.2. There will be behaviours which would not be reasonable or appropriate to categorise as anti-social behaviour and respond to under the Anti-social Behaviour Policy. Where the behaviour is not anti-social behaviour, and therefore, unlikely to be a tenancy breach, we will not seek to label someone as a perpetrator or a victim, nor will we be likely to consider any of our legal tools which are available to use in anti-social behaviour cases and instead will consider early intervention resolutions such as mediation or wider community activities.
- 2.3. Although some behaviours are not anti-social behaviour, they can still cause a great deal of upset and frustration to neighbours, creating tensions between neighbours and wider communities. Whilst we may be limited in our responses, this policy is designed to lead to better outcomes and set out how we may be able to assist.
- 2.4. Examples of these types of behaviour which we do not consider to be anti-social behaviour include but are not limited to:
 - General household or living noise (babies crying, people talking and walking in their homes, closing doors and windows, vacuuming, and using white goods at reasonable times, working from home in a computer-based role)
 - Carrying out DIY at reasonable times
 - Cigarette and cooking smells
 - Isolated incidents of noise, loud music
 - Isolated incidents of loud shouting and arguing
 - Reasonable dog barking and cats defecating
 - Mowing of lawn or other garden maintenance at reasonable times
 - Children playing (as long as the 'playing' does not include behaviour that could be reasonably considered as anti-social behaviour)
 - Barbeques and bonfires
 - Parking disagreements (if the other driver is parking in accordance with all contractual / legal requirements)
 - Motorbike / car engines starting / running
 - Minor personal conflict such as 'dirty looks', the positioning of refuse bins, personal dislikes, personal relationship breakdowns, or children falling out with each other.

Scope and associated policies

- 2.5. The purpose of this policy is to build relationships between parties; it is therefore unlikely that we will be able to assist the person making the report to remain anonymous. There may be times when we cannot guarantee confidentiality, even when a customer requests it. This could include situations where we identify a safeguarding concern, or where a criminal offence has taken place.
- 2.6. There will be times when we may work with our partner agencies to share information and identify the best possible support and guidance we can offer to parties. We will always share, store and dispose of information in line with legislation and local information sharing agreements.
- 2.7. Where the behaviour is not anti-social behaviour, and therefore, unlikely to be a tenancy breach, we will not seek to label someone as a perpetrator or a victim, nor will we be likely to consider any of our legal tools which are available to use in anti-social behaviour cases and instead will consider early intervention resolutions such as mediation.
- 2.8. Because the purpose of this policy is to develop and strengthen relationships between neighbours, we need the co-operation and support from parties involved to improve situations. Where parties refuse to a reasonable request, we may not be able to assist any further. Where this is the case, it will be clearly communicated to the party concerned.

3. Specifics of the policy

The association's approach to neighbourhood and scheme management

- 3.1. Housing Officers have dedicated on the ground responsibility for homes within their allocated area. The Housing Officer will carry out all aspects of the various housing management functions relating to their area. We aim to be a visible presence in our neighbourhoods.
- 3.2. The association will use emh services to regularly undertake fire risk assessment checks to ensure the safety of our buildings and communal areas. These are central to keeping our residents safe.
- 3.3. We aim to create well-maintained neighbourhoods in which tenants and other customers feel safe and proud to live in. We undertake activities including:
 - Maintenance of communal areas such as hard and soft landscaped areas
 - Inspecting the condition of common areas
 - Identifying and monitoring empty properties promptly
 - Reviewing service charge cost and quality
 - Providing advice and assistance to tenants and residents on services which enhance the local community
 - Using the tenant led improvement funding at a scheme level and, supporting initiatives to reduce crime
 - Co-operation with other agencies delivering services in the community so there is joined up working.

- 3.4. On our Scheme Surgery days, we spend time at a scheme completing surveys and listening to residents. These provide an opportunity for people to raise any issues about their tenancy, their property or the area. Colleagues from other departments and partner agencies may also be available.

Responding to reported issues

- 3.5. Anyone can report a neighbourhood issue to us over the phone, by email, via our website, in writing or in person. When we first receive a report of a neighbourhood issue we'll take details of what has happened, triage the information to agree whether to deal with the report through our Anti-social Behaviour, Hate Crime, Domestic Abuse or Scheme and Community Management Policies.
- 3.6. We will always take into account the views of the complainant, but we are ultimately responsible for:
- Deciding if a report is anti-social behaviour, a hate crime, domestic abuse or not
 - Deciding how it should be categorised
 - Agreeing the most appropriate course of action in a case. Including whether or not to investigate further.
- 3.7. We will refer to the parties as 'neighbours.' This is because under this policy we do not work to identify who the 'perpetrator' is and who the 'victim' is.
- 3.8. We will aim to ensure that low level issues causing neighbourhood friction are dealt with at the appropriate level and not inappropriately handled as anti-social behaviour. A report will be logged as 'record only' and early resolutions will be promoted including speaking to neighbours, promoting mediation services. In each instance we will inform the customer of the policy we are following.
- A resident may ask us to reconsider the policy that their reported issue is being handled under. If a complainant disagrees with our reconsideration, they will be informed about our complaint's procedure.
- 3.9. Our role in neighbourhood issues is primarily one of enabling neighbours to work together to resolve issues that are not anti-social behaviour. We will attempt to agree action plans to address the issue setting out who is responsible for what. We will refer to our Scheme and Community Management Policy and toolkits to determine potential appropriate actions.
- 3.10. Actions may include:
- Providing information and support to residents so they can manage neighbourhood issues including positive communication with neighbours
 - Explaining how to inform us about an escalation of issues and how to access support
 - Challenging any unreasonable expectations including in the role that the association can take
 - Advising neighbours on accessible and inclusive methods for evidence gathering
 - Further investigation related to the nature of the property and not the person occupying it.

Escalation to other policies

- 3.11. Escalation to other policies If it becomes clear during discussions with customers that a matter should be investigated under our Anti-social Behaviour Policy, we will inform both neighbours in writing and agree a new action plan. The case will be risk assessed in line with the Anti-social Behaviour Policy, which will apply. A particular trigger for this may be as a result of a vulnerability identified for one or both of the parties.

Vulnerabilities and support needs

- 3.12. At all stages we will consider the support needs of the parties involved. We also recognise that sometimes personal circumstances may affect a person's tolerance, perception, or ability to cope with certain situations. When we recognise that this could be a contributory factor, we will work to identify suitable referrals and support.

Working in partnership

- 3.13. We will work in partnership with a variety of organisations across all districts where we own and manage homes including, but not limited to:

- District and County Councils
- Police services
- Fire and rescue services
- NHS medical / mental health teams
- Social care (adult / children)
- Youth Offending Team / Probation
- Third party or voluntary sector service providers
- Refuge and other domestic abuse support services
- Substance misuse support services

- 3.14. We may refer customers onto other agencies to support their issue.

Information sharing

- 3.15. The association are party to information sharing agreements to allow us to lawfully share information that is necessary for the purpose of detecting and tackling anti-social behaviour and crime. This may include information as part of a neighbourhood matter.
- 3.16. Where we do share information with other agencies, we will ensure that the transfer of this information is done safely, the information is stored appropriately, it is not shared with a third party without permission (unless required by law) and is subject to an appropriate retention schedule. The same principles will apply where we receive information from other agencies.
- 3.17. When we receive subject access requests we will deal with these lawfully and with appreciation of the Information Commissioner's Office guidance in relation to these requests.

Confidentiality

- 3.18. Where a customer or neighbour asks for us to keep their details/identity confidential we will explain that this makes it difficult to take action.

- 3.19. There may be some information that a complainant tells us that we cannot keep confidential, even if they wish us to. This would include information relating to criminal behaviour and safeguarding issues. Where appropriate we will tell the complainant that we need to share the information and who with.

4. Implementation

Performance monitoring

- 4.1. We will closely monitor the quality of the service that we provide in relation to neighbourhood matters. We will do this by:
- Ensuring service standards are being met
 - Completing customer satisfaction surveys (where possible).

Compliments, suggestions and complaints

- 4.2. If you're dissatisfied with the service you have received, you can raise a complaint by completing the complaints form on the relevant association's website:
- [Warwickshire Rural Housing Association](#)
 - [Peak District Rural Housing Association](#)
 - [Leicestershire Rural Housing Association](#)
 - [Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association](#)

Other ways you can tell us about a complaint are:

- By telephone to: 0300 1234 009
 - In writing: Midlands Rural Housing, Memorial House, Stenson Road, Coalville, LE67 4JP
- 4.3. Any feedback which is considered to be a complaint will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

Review

- 4.4. This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure compliance with national best practice and legislation. This review may take place earlier if a significant change to legislation or policy occurs.

Responsibilities

- 4.5. The Housing Services Managers are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy
- 4.6. The Housing Services Managers are responsible for oversight and governance of the policy including reviewing this document.

5. Associated documents

- Anti-social Behaviour Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Hate Crime Policy
- Acceptable Behaviour Procedure

- Vulnerable Residents Policy
- Tenancy agreement