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1. Policy Statement

Nehemiah UCHA is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour as it recognises that anti-social behaviour is damaging within communities and that the lives of customers and their families can be blighted by the behaviour of an unreasonable minority. Nehemiah UCHA’s mission statement ‘to build successful, sustainable and diverse communities by providing housing and wellbeing services in a culturally sensitive way to our current and our future customers’, can only be delivered by dealing with and preventing anti-social behaviour successfully.

Nehemiah UCHA is committed to preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour and has signed up to the Respect – ASB Charter for Housing. We will work with partners and communities to tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour, by using preventative and early intervention measures but where behaviour does not change we will use the full range of enforcement tools appropriately, protecting victims and witnesses.

2. Definition of Anti-social behaviour

Nehemiah UCHA views any conduct capable of causing a nuisance or annoyance to anyone as anti-social behaviour. This conduct could be persistent and ongoing, affecting a person’s ability to enjoy their home and the community in which they live.
Examples of anti-social behaviour include:

- Noise nuisance.
- Intimidation and harassment.
- Aggressive and threatening language and behaviour.
- Hate-related behaviour and/or incidents that targets members of identified groups because of their perceived differences (e.g. race, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion, age).
- Domestic abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse).
- Using homes to sell, grow/cultivate drugs, or for other unlawful purposes.
- Vandalism and damage to property.
- Nuisance from vehicles.
- Actual violence against people and property or land.
- Nuisance caused by alcohol and solvent abuse.
- Nuisance caused by pets and animals.
- Overgrown and untidy gardens, dumped rubbish, lack of care for homes or communal areas.
- Other criminal behaviour

This list is not exhaustive.

3. Our Policy

Nehemiah UCHA’s approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour is based around the principles within the Anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014:

- **Focusing the response to anti-social behaviour on the needs of victims** – working with other agencies to identify and support people at high risk of harm. With flexible approaches, enabling Nehemiah UCHA to deliver solutions that will work.

- **Empowering communities to get involved in tackling anti-social behaviour** – by agreeing shared actions with residents and partners, to develop safe communities where anti-social behaviour is recognised as unacceptable and dealt with.

- **Ensure professionals are able to protect the public quickly** – through the appropriate use of the legislation that could include an action for possession of the perpetrators home as the last resort.

- **Focus on long-term solutions** – working with partners to address the underlying issues that drive anti-social behaviour, such as binge drinking, drug use, mental health issues, troubled family backgrounds and irresponsible dog ownership.

3(i) Tenancy Conditions
Nehemiah UCHA expects its customers to comply with the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreement and to ensure that their actions and those of their family or visitors do not breach these by engaging in anti-social behaviour. Nehemiah UCHA’s relevant tenancy agreement clauses are:

**Use of Premises**

To use the Premises for residential purposes as the Tenant’s only or principle home and not to:

(i) Operate any business at the Premises that might cause a nuisance or annoyance to other persons in the neighbourhood.

(ii) Use or allow the Premises to be used for any immoral or illegal purpose.

(iii) Use any equipment operated by butane gas or store butane gas bottles in the premises.

**Nuisance**

Neither to cause, or act in a way which is likely to cause, nor allow members of his or her household or visitors to cause, or act in a way which is likely to cause, a nuisance or annoyance to other persons in the neighbourhood or to any tenant, agent, employee or contractor of the Association.

**Racial and Other Harassment**

Neither to commit, nor allow members of his or her household or visitors to commit, any harassment, or threat of harassment, on the grounds of race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability that may interfere with the peace and comfort of, or may cause offence to, other persons in the neighbourhood or to any tenant, employee, agent or contractor of the Association.

**Noise**

Neither to play nor allow to be played, any radio, television, record or tape recording, musical instrument, or digital music player so loudly that it causes, or is likely to cause, a nuisance or annoyance, at any time, to other persons in the neighbourhood.

**Pets**
(i) Not to keep any animals registered under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 or the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 at the Premises.

(ii) To keep under control any pet(s) that might cause a nuisance or annoyance to other persons in the neighbourhood.

3(ii) Early Intervention and Prevention of Anti-social Behaviour

Customers will be told at the application stage that they are expected to be a good neighbour and the conduct expected of them will be explained. This will include the need for tolerance towards others. Our policy on anti-social behaviour will be discussed with all new customers at the tenancy sign up stage.

- Nehemiah UCHA will give honest advice on how our customers can deal with disputes with their neighbours, explaining what we can and can’t do and what they will need to do to resolve issues and problems.
- We will encourage our customers to speak to their neighbours where appropriate to try and resolve matters themselves. Where it is appropriate Nehemiah UCHA will offer mediation to help customers resolve disputes.
- We will work with other agencies where appropriate to ensure that the appropriate level of support needed by individual customers to sustain a tenancy is available.
- We will work with other agencies where appropriate to obtain support for parents to improve parenting skills and signpost accordingly.
- We will work with other agencies where appropriate to contribute to the provision of diversionary activities to engage young people positively. Where a local authority engages in Family Intervention Projects and the Troubled Families Programme, Nehemiah UCHA will assist in providing support where possible.
- Nehemiah UCHA will participate in strategies on anti-social behaviour introduced by local authorities and the Police. We will work in partnership with relevant agencies to develop sustainable estates where anti-social behaviour is not tolerated.
- Nehemiah UCHA will promote and support the formation of Neighbourhood Watch Groups.
- Nehemiah UCHA will work to Secured by Design standards where possible on all new developments and incorporate these principles in refurbishment schemes.

3(iii) Information for Customers

Nehemiah UCHA will give customers honest advice about what we can and cannot do and what they will need to do to put a stop to the problems they are experiencing. We will publish information on how to contact us to report anti-social behaviour, what
information we will need and the service standards that our customers can expect from us in dealing with reports of anti-social behaviour. We will provide our customers with a named contact responsible for dealing with their report. If we identify anti-social behaviour we will agree an action plan which will include what Nehemiah UCHA will do, what the customer needs to do and outline the process for dealing with reports of anti-social behaviour.

3(iv) Support for Complainants

The following are examples of how Nehemiah UCHA will support victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour:

- **Regular contact** – the housing team will be in regular contact with complainants to make sure that as many of their needs are being met as possible and to provide feedback on the progress of dealing with the anti-social behaviour.
- **Victim Support** – Nehemiah UCHA can provide contact details of Victim Support who in turn can provide support and guidance for victims of crime.
- **Referrals to Other Agencies** - Nehemiah UCHA can make referrals to agencies that provide specialist advice and support such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, the Police, Mediation services and local authorities.
- **Support During Legal Action** – If a customer needs to attend court we will agree with them what support is necessary. For example, we can arrange transport and stay with customers during Court proceedings and help with childcare costs. In extreme cases where there is a risk to a customer's safety, we may be able to help with alternative accommodation, on a temporary or permanent basis depending on the circumstances of the case.
- **Additional Security Measures** – In cases where a victim/witness is felt to be at risk of reprisals, either against themselves or their property, Nehemiah UCHA can provide additional security measures. This can include fitting window locks, security lights, provision of a panic alarm or an emergency calls only mobile phone, for example.
- **Police Protection** – If there is risk of violence, we will work with the Police who can support complainants in preventing complainants from being further intimidated.

3(v) Remedies For Dealing With Anti-social Behaviour

Nehemiah UCHA will use a range of options, depending upon the nature of the case, to resolve the anti-social behaviour, which could include any of the following:

*Non Legal Action*
• Depending on the situation Nehemiah UCHA will interview the person that the allegation has been made about to ensure that they are given an opportunity to change their behaviour. This will be necessary before more formal action is taken.

• **Mediation** – where appropriate, mediation will be offered to the parties involved in order to try to achieve an understanding of the issue in order to enable both sides to move towards a solution to the complaint. We engage the services of a trained mediator who remains impartial throughout the process.

• **Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC)** – If appropriate we will invite the person committing the anti-social behaviour to sign a voluntary written agreement with, Nehemiah UCHA and in some circumstances other agencies involved in dealing with the anti-social behaviour such as the Police. This type of agreement can be considered where the person/s who has committed anti-social behaviour has expressed genuine willingness to change their behaviour.

• **Parenting Contracts** – are a supportive measure that provides a structured and balanced way for agencies to work with parents on a voluntary basis to improve the behaviour of a child or young person up to the age of 17. This would involve voluntarily signing a written contract between the parent, Nehemiah UCHA and other agencies involved. The contract will normally require the parent to engage in a parenting programme and/or specify particular ways in which the parent is required to exercise control over their child’s behaviour.

• **Family Intervention Projects** – where there is a Family Intervention Project operating in a given local authority area we will liaise with the local authority in order to seek a referral to the Project where appropriate. Family Intervention Projects exist to sustain the tenancy of families at risk of eviction for anti-social behaviour. The projects, which are voluntary, provide intensive support to a family through various agencies. Where the scheme is in operation, the family being supported must either change their behaviour or risk losing their home.

• **Troubled Families Programme** – is a programme introduced by the Government to deal with those families who have problems and cause problems to the community around them, putting high costs on the public sector. Nehemiah UCHA will support the local authority with programmes that exist to tackle these troubled families to reduce anti-social behaviour.

**Legal Action**
Nehemiah UCHA will consider legal action if all other means of resolving the complaint have failed. Where anti-social behaviour is very serious we may start legal action straightaway.

- **Injunction** - is an order from the County Court requiring a person to do something or prevent them from doing something. An injunction will usually be the first form of legal action that Nehemiah UCHA will consider after informal action has failed. We will work with other agencies such as mental health support professionals and drug and alcohol support services to provide support services to supervise compliance with the positive terms of an injunction. Injunctions can be used for adults and minors.

- **Demotion of Tenancy** – is a court order reducing the tenancy rights of a person responsible for anti-social behaviour for a period of 12 months. Demotions will be sought where Nehemiah UCHA believes that somebody will respond to such an incentive to change their behaviour.

- **Possession Proceedings** – we will make an application for a possession order asking the Court to end the tenancy of a customer who is acting in an anti-social manner or whose visitors are acting in such a manner, where the behaviour of the tenant/their visitors is serious enough and/or where other methods of controlling the behaviour has been tried and failed. We will therefore only use possession proceedings as a last resort.

- **Ending an Assured Shorthold Tenancy** – Assured shorthold tenancies are issued to customers living in our short term supported housing schemes. Where the tenant breaches their tenancy agreement during this time and their behaviour doesn’t change then Nehemiah UCHA may end the tenancy by serving a Section 21 Notice.

3(vi) **Multi Agency Partnerships**

Nehemiah UCHA recognises that tackling the complex issue of anti-social behaviour is not the sole responsibility of the housing provider and cannot be dealt with alone.

Nehemiah UCHA works with other agencies in the local Community Safety Partnership (CSP). Including:

- Local authorities
- Police
- Fire Service
- Probation Service
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Community and Voluntary Groups
Nehemiah UCHA will be guided by the relevant Community Remedy Documents produced by the Police when identifying solutions to anti-social behaviour issues.

4. **Customer Feedback**

In order to monitor how we deal with anti-social behaviour we will aim to obtain feedback from 20% of complainants at the end of their case about their experience of reporting anti-social behaviour to Nehemiah UCHA. We will use the information collated in this survey to continually evaluate and improve the anti-social behaviour service and will include the survey outcomes in our performance reports to Operations Committee and our customers.

5. **Data Protection and Information Exchange**


6. **Training and Support for Staff**

Nehemiah UCHA will ensure that employees dealing with anti-social behaviour have received the appropriate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with the issues presented.

7. **Monitoring and Review**

Quarterly reports will be made to Nehemiah UCHA’s Operations Committee to monitor the effectiveness and success of the policy. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if legislation or good practice dictates.

8. **Link to Other Policies.**

This policy should be read and implemented in conjunction with the following Nehemiah UCHA Housing Management Policies:

- Lettings policy
- Pet policy
- Safeguarding children & adults at risk policy
- Tenancy policy
- Tenancy fraud policy
- Tenancy sustainment policy