

Community Management Policy

Approval Route	Executive Director Operations
Applies to:	Staff, Residents, Visitors

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines ExtraCare's policy for preventing and tackling issues of disharmony, conflict and disputes between residents in their home, and within our retirement communities.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to provide a framework of non-legal options for residents to help resolve behaviours that may impact on them that do not meet the threshold of anti-social behaviour.
- 1.3 This policy complements our Anti-Social Behaviour and Acceptable Behaviour policies to ensure that we appropriately prevent and tackle behaviours that may negatively impact on residents. The Community Management Policy's focus is to address behaviours that, when not meeting the threshold of anti-social behaviour, ensures there are a range of measures ExtraCare will pursue to assist residents to resolve such issues.

2. Definitions

Term	Definition
Community Management	An approach to resolve disharmony, disputes and conflict between residents where behaviours impacting on residents within the home do not meet the threshold of ASB. Examples would be neighbour disputes, household noise, clash of lifestyles.
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person (ASB, Crime & Policing Act, 2014).

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Acceptable Behaviour	An approach to resolve issues of behaviour within communal settings of our retirement communities, to reinforce ExtraCare's Community Charter.
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3. Regulatory and Legal Considerations

- 3.1 ExtraCare has a regulatory duty to comply with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards, specifically the Neighbourhood & Community Standard. This states that Registered Providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the Police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.
- 3.2 The Housing Ombudsman Service, in their housing sector-wide review into noise complaints, concluded that landlords were dealing with noise in a way that was 'fundamentally unfair'. They concluded: *"Most noise reports concern household noise rather than anti-social behaviour.... It is unfair to both the resident making the complaint and the resident being complained about for the noise to be treated as something it is not.... This approach entrenches disputes and mismanages expectations"*. The Ombudsman listed several recommendations in their report, with a key recommendation being that landlords should have a proactive 'good neighbourhood / community management' type policy.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 Detailed responsibilities are below:

Executive Director Operations	Responsible for approving this policy and any subsequent updates or reviews.
Regional Operations Managers	Ensure the implementation of this policy across all ExtraCare locations. Ensure oversight of Policy so that Location Managers, Housing Officers and other staff work collectively to implement effective solutions to issues being dealt with under this policy.
Location Managers	Ensure enactment of policy by ensuring that all relevant staff, including local teams, work in partnership through a multi-team approach to address community management issues.
Housing Officers	Lead the approach and strategies for resolving cases relating to community management in partnership with the location manager, and ensuring a multi-agency approach where applicable, involving all relevant agencies.
Local Housing Teams	To assist in the collection of evidence to support appropriate action and monitor such actions.
All Staff	Support the implementation of this policy through co-operation, training and to provide insight and advice as relevant.

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5. Policy Statement

Definition

- 5.1 ExtraCare recognises that some behaviours between residents may not meet the statutory definition of anti-social behaviour meaning that enforcement action is unlikely to be appropriate. In such cases, ExtraCare will seek to resolve such issues instead through this Community Management Policy.
- 5.2 When we receive a report of behaviour that is impacting negatively on others, we will triage the report and assess whether the report is most effectively processed through the Community Management Policy, Anti-Social Behaviour Policy or Acceptable Behaviour Policy, and record it accordingly.
- 5.3 Examples of issues that are likely be dealt with under this Community Management Policy are:
- Household noise;
 - Clash of lifestyle;
 - Inappropriate parking of vehicles;
 - Smoking;
 - Odours from apartment;
 - Balcony/patio use;
 - Littering; and
 - Unfriendly conduct.

Approach:

- 5.4 We will be proactive in managing our communities by speaking with residents about such issues through regular housing support visits, our resident 'street' meetings, managers surgeries, and liaising with our resident associations.
- 5.5 We shall seek to reduce noise transference between properties by encouraging residents to fit floor coverings that have sufficient acoustic-deadening underlay. When properties are vacated, and the outgoing resident leaves behind reasonable quality floor coverings, we will not remove these as part of the re-let works (unless requested by the incoming resident, or unless the outgoing resident had a pet; a dog or cat).
- 5.6 We will advise residents of their obligations towards their neighbour(s) as described in their tenancy/lease agreement and provide support to residents to help ensure these are maintained. We will advise on the use of balconies/patios, parking, communal facilities & amenities to prevent conflict between residents. We shall also provide a range of opportunities for residents to integrate with each other through activities and events. We shall reinforce our values to residents by promoting behaviours that encourage harmony, tolerance and compassion.

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- 5.7 We will seek a range of non-legal solutions to seek to resolve community management issues, including providing advice; assisting residents to negotiate voluntary agreements (with each other); and encouraging mediation (including community-based mediation). We will also work with our Resident Associations to seek to address community issues. We will consider all reasonable options to seek to resolve disputes.
- 5.8 We reserve the right to close cases where reasonable resolution(s) have been suggested to resolve disputes between residents.

Service Standards

- 5.9 We will contact those reporting issues under this policy within 5 working days of the report.
- 5.10 We will ensure that the resident has the opportunity of an advocate to support them in such a meeting.
- 5.11 We will ensure appropriate support is provided to all residents involved in seeking to find a solution to a community management issue, either through our own Wellbeing Team, or external agencies. In seeking to ensure we offer appropriate support we will also be mindful of our obligations under the Equality Act, 2020. This will include consideration of reasonable adjustments such as translation services; and appropriate consideration of issues relating to protected characteristics.

Training & Guidance

- 5.12 We will periodically train relevant staff to effectively manage reports and cases of community management. We will train staff to respond in a compassionate and empathetic way to reports of community management issues.
- 5.13 We will provide conflict resolution and mediation training to relevant persons to ensure effective responses to community management issues.

6. Monitoring and Review

- 6.1 Compliance with this policy will be monitored Housing & Resident Engagement Manager and Housing Standards & Performance Officer through regular case reviews. This policy will be reviewed as a minimum every 3 years, in consultation with ExtraCare's Resident Forum.

7. Associated Policies

Anti-Social Behaviour Policy	Domestic Abuse Policy
Acceptable Behaviour Policy	Hoarding Intervention Guidance
Data Protection Policy	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

8. Associated Work Instructions

ASB Training PowerPoint	ExtraCare Housing Guide
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