

Policy Owner	Stuart Blackie	Business Area	Housing
		Tenancy Management	
Document Type	Policy- L1		

## Good Neighbour Policy

### 1.0 Aim

- 1.1 Being a ‘good neighbour’ can help all residents enjoy living in a safe and secure environment. Everyone has the right to enjoy living in their home in peace and comfort. This means that all customers of Coastline must show consideration, think of others and be a ‘Good Neighbour.’ One of the conditions of the Tenancy Agreement states that neither the tenancy holder nor anyone living in the household or visitors should cause any nuisance or harassment.
- 1.2 The Good Neighbour Management Policy gives customers clear guidelines on how to integrate into their community, promote the respect of each other’s differences, show consideration and to live harmoniously.

### 2.0 Coastline’s responsibilities

- 2.1 This policy has been produced following the Housing Ombudsman Service – Noise Spotlight Report Recommendations 2022 and sets out:
  - Coastline’s responsibilities;
  - How to be a ‘Good Neighbour’;
  - Household noise and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB); and
  - Identifying and dealing with ASB.
- 2.2 Coastline is a partner of Safer Cornwall which is the community safety partnership for Cornwall. Coastline also has a Service Level Agreement with Cornwall Council Community Safety Team (Anti-social behaviour) to improve joint working at community level to achieve the aims and targets within the Cornwall Housing strategy associated with managing anti-social behaviour and crime and disorder. This partnership brings together a wide range of agencies to do all that we can to ensure that everyone who lives, works or visits Cornwall can do so in security and safety.
- 2.3 Coastline recognises that anti-social behaviour (ASB) has a detrimental effect on the quality of life enjoyed by our residents and is committed to preventing and tackling the problems caused by ASB. This is covered in our ASB policy, which is available on the Coastline Housing Website.
- 2.4 Coastline uses mediation, information sharing and community building events to ensure that low level issues of neighbour friction are dealt with at the appropriate levels and not inappropriately handled as potential ASB.
- 2.5 Coastline has engaged customers in the development of this policy.

### 3.0 Our approach to being a ‘Good Neighbour’

- 3.1 Coastline encourages neighbours to resolve some of their differences by communicating in a respectful and courteous way if they feel able to discuss the problem. If things don't

improve or the situation is too serious to deal with at an informal level, the Tenancy Management Coordinator will intervene to investigate the situation and we may call on the assistance of the specialist services offered by other agencies eg mediation. We will take action against perpetrators of serious ASB in line with our ASB Policy.

#### **4.0 Looking after neighbourhoods**

4.1 Coastline customers have a responsibility to keep their internal and external communal areas clear of items, rubbish and fly-tipping. Fly-tipping can be reported to Cornwall Council and their website page can be reached via this link [Fly-tipping](#)

4.2 Coastline has an Estates Standard and this is supported by the Community Standard Inspection programme undertaken by the Tenancy Team to monitor and improve our neighbourhoods. Customers are invited and encouraged to attend these inspections with colleagues to identify areas that need attention and improvement. Coastline Estate Standards can be found on the Coastline Housing Website.

#### **5.0 Gardens**

5.1 Gardens are the customers' responsibility as set out in the Tenancy Agreement. Gardens should be kept in a cultivated condition and clear of debris. If gardens are neglected and customers do not take action to improve the situation, we may take legal action for breach of tenancy, and do the required work and recharge the customer. If there is a genuine reason for an overgrown garden, such as not being able to maintain it due to health issues or financial hardship, we will make an assessment on a case-by-case basis and where possible, assist by signposting to support.

5.2 A Tool Loan Project may be able to provide gardening equipment on loan. The Tenancy Management Coordinator can help with this and make a referral into the service.

#### **6.0 Rubbish and recycling**

6.1 A common source of complaints concerns rubbish disposal. To help avoid friction with neighbours we suggest customers;

- Put bins out for collection on the right day and ensure they are covered and protected from gulls;
- Put an identification mark on bins to avoid any confusion over ownership with neighbours;
- Clean up any debris that is left in the refuse collection area;
- Use the correct recycling bins for collection eg garden waste for the garden bin; and
- Bulky rubbish should be reported to Cornwall Council, paid for, and put out on the agreed day for collection.

6.2 Customers must ensure that rubbish is put out for collection on the appropriate day in a responsible manner. Seagull proof bags can be used to protect rubbish and are available via Cornwall Council. The link is <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-waste/recycling/locations-that-stock-recycling-containers-and-seagull-proof-sacks/>

6.3 Cornwall Council offers recycling services and we encourage customers to think about the environment and recycle as much as possible. You can use this link to find out which days your rubbish and recycling are collected <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-waste/>

## **7.0 Pets**

7.1 Coastline's Pet Policy, available on the Coastline Website, outlines the type and number of animals that are permitted in customers' homes.

- Customers must ensure that their pet is not prohibited by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, or by any other law;
- Customers are responsible for the behaviour of any pets owned by them or owned by anyone living in or visiting the household;
- All reasonable steps should be taken to supervise and keep such pets under control; and
- All reasonable steps should be taken to prevent such pets causing nuisance, annoyance or danger to neighbours or visitors. This includes fouling, noise or smell from domestic pets.

## **8.0 Household noise and anti-social behaviour**

8.1 Coastline will identify whether a noise report should be handled under the ASB policy or the Good Neighbourhood Management policy. This should include a recognition that the time the noise occurred has a bearing on whether the noise is anti-social in nature.

8.2 Noise can be a real nuisance to neighbours but sometimes people do not realise that they are causing annoyance so we encourage customers to approach their neighbour in a calm and reasonable manner if there is a problem. The Tenancy Management Coordinator can be contacted for advice if anyone is anxious about approaching their neighbour.

8.3 Noise can come from many sources and can be worse in flats. We encourage customers to install carpets with underlay and use rugs. We also recommend the use of anti-vibration mats under washing machines and drying machines for customers who are in upstairs flats. Permission is needed to install laminate flooring and the correct underlay needs to be used.

Examples of noise:

- Regularly playing loud music early in the morning or late at night;
- Car repairs or DIY activities in the early morning or late at night;
- Gaming devices or loud TV noise early in the morning or late at night, however there should be tolerance for those who are hard of hearing;
- Being considerate about the use of washing and drying machines early in the morning or late at night;
- Door slamming, shouting and raising voices indoors and outdoors;
- Walking about with heavy shoes or high heels in flats;
- Barking dogs; and
- Revving up cars in the street, or in driveways.

## **9.0 Being Reasonable**

9.1 When living in a flat, semi-detached or terraced house, hearing some noise from neighbouring properties is inevitable.

Examples of noise that is not considered to be ASB and just general living noise are as follows:

- Babies crying;
- People walking around their home;
- Use of the washing machine;
- Children playing;
- Toilets flushing;
- Taps being turned on;
- Doors occasionally slamming or banging;
- Occasional exchange of words with a partner;
- DIY during the daytime;
- BBQ on a nice day;
- Loud TV for someone hard of hearing; and
- One off events such as New Year.

## 10.0 Sound Insulation

- 10.1 Sound insulation can be a problem in some of Coastline's homes. This is usually reflective of the age and type of property which can impact on our ability to manage the problem.

Domestic noise from neighbours such as footsteps, talking, dropping objects or children playing can be heard in these homes. Although this can be stressful, learning to live with that noise may be necessary. Legally people are entitled to go about their life creating normal amounts of noise without having to worry about how it affects neighbours. We have to balance a level of tolerance with others.

## 11.0 Statutory Noise v Nuisance and Annoyance

- 11.1 Cornwall Council Environmental Health has the power to enforce sanctions for Statutory Noise nuisance. The link to their page on noise nuisance can be found here:  
<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/environmental-protection/noise/>

In order for noise to be considered a statutory nuisance it must meet one of the following legal tests:

- Unreasonably and substantially interfere with the use or enjoyment of a home or other premise; and
- Injure health or be likely to injure health.

If one of the above is met, then a Noise Abatement Notice can be served and Environmental Health Officers have the ability to issue warning notices, a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN), and customer may face prosecution, or their noise equipment may even be seized.

## 12.0 Parking

- 12.1 Many neighbour disputes can arise over the failure to be considerate to other residents and particularly where parking is concerned. Parking disputes can result in complaints and conflicts between neighbours which should be avoidable. Coastline cannot control parking and are unable to deal with these complaints effectively because even if a breach of tenancy could be proved it is very unlikely that a County Court would consider legal action as being

appropriate. Therefore we expect neighbours to communicate respectfully to resolve these issues between themselves.

- 12.2 Etiquette, good manners and common sense are the main points to consider to avoid parking disputes with neighbours.

Examples of inconsiderate parking behaviour include;

- Causing obstructions of any kind;
- Parking too close to other vehicles which will make it difficult to get out;
- Having multiple vehicles that aren't being used;
- Parking in a Disabled bay when not qualified to do so (see section 13.0);
- Performing car repairs that are considered dangerous, such as having a vehicle on blocks;
- Not being courteous towards neighbours when communicating about such matters;

Parking outside your home;

- Although people will generally tend to park outside their own home, it's important to note that no one has an automatic right to do so;
- On street parking is available to everyone on a first come first served basis providing they are not contravening the Highway Code;
- In addition to residents, other road users and visitors also have the right to park outside your home providing they are not contravening the Highway Code.
- Where there is allocated parking in an area residents should only use spaces allocated to them.

### **13.0 Disabled parking bays**

- 13.1 Only Blue Badge holders displaying their badge in the front of the vehicle can park in disabled parking spaces. Unauthorised users may receive a penalty charge notice from Cornwall Council.

### **14.0 Drugs**

- 14.1 Coastline works closely with the Police to tackle issues around drug dealing but we are unable to effectively deal with issues relating to people smoking or possessing cannabis for personal issue.

### **15.0 Complaints**

- 15.1 Where complainants feel that we have not carried out our duties under this Policy they have the right to make a complaint to us under our Complaints Policy.

### **16.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

- 16.1 Throughout the operation of our Policies and through our dealings with those involved in cases we will have regard to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion related policies at all times.

All customers (and their advocates) will have access to this document upon request or from our website.

### **17.0 Links to other Policies and documents**

17.1 This Policy will be publicised to customers, potential customers and staff colleagues in a number of ways:

- Pre-tenancy interview and sign-up documents (electronic on USB stick or paper copies);
- Customer Newsletters;
- Coastline's Website;
- Customer portal (My Coastline);
- Intranet;
- Policy documents;
- Training; and
- Social Media.

The following legislation, guidance, policies and documents are associated with this Policy:

- Respect – ASB Charter for Housing;
- ASB Policy;
- Lettings & Allocations Policy;
- Probationary Policy;
- Hate Crime Policy;
- Domestic Abuse Policy;
- Equality & Diversity & Inclusion Policy;
- Mutual Exchange Policy;
- Safeguarding Adults and Children policies;
- Complaints Policy;
- Pet Policy;
- Tenancy Agreements;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Housing Act 1996;
- Housing Act 1988;
- Anti-social Behaviour Act (2003);
- Criminal Justice Act 2003; and
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.