

## **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The Saffron Group (referred to hereafter as 'Saffron') does not accept Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and will make this clear to its tenants and to any person who is seeking a tenancy. Saffron will take action where it is appropriate and proportionate to deal with Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate crime or harassment caused by tenants or any other persons in areas where we have homes, or communities we manage.

Saffron recognises that it plays a key role in conjunction with other agencies in preventing and addressing Anti-social behaviour in the communities in which it operates. It acknowledges that incidents of ASB can blight areas in which it owns and manages properties. Prompt and effective action, in conjunction with other agencies can help to address this problem and improve the quality of life of people in these communities affected.

Saffron will adopt in partnership with other agencies, a 'cross tenure' approach where necessary to address ASB in the community and will play a full part in multi-agency approaches. Saffron will have regard to the Regulator of Social Housing National and Saffron's Local Standards (with particular reference to the Neighbourhood and Community Standard). Saffron will ensure that this policy and its accompanying procedures are compatible with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), the Housing Act 1996, The Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and obligations imposed by other legislation including the Equalities Act 2010. This ASB policy also takes into account Saffron's policies in respect of Starter Tenancies, Equality and Diversity, Data Protection, Neighbourhood Management and Domestic Abuse Policy

Saffron's Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime policy reflects its corporate aims, in particular; 'Saffron is an organisation that; cares about and works with local communities', and 'provides the optimum level of quality services'.

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This Policy is designed to set out Saffron's position and approach to Anti-social behaviour in the communities in which it operates.

### **2. POLICY**

- 2.1 Saffron will provide tenants with a tenancy agreement, and leaflets which clearly outline rights, responsibilities and Saffron's role in terms of Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime. Saffron will seek to ensure its Tenancy Conditions are complied with and enforce them as appropriate and proportionate (this will also apply to leaseholders and leasehold covenants). Saffron will ensure all its Tenancy Agreements comply with current legislation to enable it to deal effectively with ASB.

- 2.2 Saffron recognises the stress and disruption to lives that can be caused by the Anti-social behaviour of others and will have procedures in place to ensure that complaints are dealt with quickly and effectively using early intervention where this is necessary. Responding to ASB is an essential element of Housing Management and the services provided will be coordinated by the Executive Director of Operations who will ensure that staff responsible for tackling this work are appropriately trained in legislation and the relevant policies and procedures to be implemented.
- 2.3 Saffron's policy and procedures in respect of ASB will ensure a consistent approach. Any action Saffron takes will be proportionate to the complaint, ensuring it conforms to tests of reasonableness and / or proportionality that housing legislation requires.
- 2.4 Procedures will reflect that the parties involved can often effectively be empowered to address some cases of nuisance. If problems can be resolved at an early stage it can sometimes prevent the situation from escalating. Neighbourhood Officers can provide advice and assistance in these cases and if agreement cannot be reached, it may be appropriate to offer Mediation and/or other Dispute Resolution services, and our Officers are able to refer to an independent organisation who will mediate between the affected parties on Saffron's behalf. This course of action may not of course be appropriate where the behaviour is of a more serious nature and involved for example; threats, violence or harassment. In such cases Saffron would normally consider a range of approaches available including legal remedies as appropriate. In those cases resulting in legal action being undertaken, it is important to demonstrate that efforts to resolve the Anti-Social behaviour have been made. Saffron's procedures in respect of ASB are outlined in its Statement of Procedures.
- 2.5 Saffron's Tenancy Agreements make clear the standards of behaviour that are expected from tenants, those who live with them and their visitors. It also makes it clear that the tenant is responsible for the behaviour of people who live with or visit them (Part C clauses 4a-e).
- 2.6 Saffron will develop formal liaison arrangements with other agencies and organisations in order to best address ASB and support sustainable communities. Saffron will share information with these agencies where it is appropriate to do so. These agencies will include but are not limited to the Police, Probation Service, Social Services, Youth Offending Teams, Local Authorities, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and Operational Partnership Teams (OPTs).
- 2.7 It is Saffron's policy to address the problem of ASB rather than to transfer tenants. Empty dwellings left by complainants will need to be reallocated and the problem will remain unresolved. If the perpetrator is moved, they may then be placed in another environment where the nuisance is likely to recur. Only in certain exceptional circumstances will the Trust recommend the transfer of tenants and then only after other options have been pursued.

2.8 Saffron will be rigorous in its decision making when considering rehousing any person who has been or is guilty of Anti-Social behaviour or criminal activity adversely affecting other people in the quiet enjoyment of their homes.

2.9 Saffron will consider in all cases, when disclosed, the support needs, disabilities and vulnerabilities of all parties involved in a case. Consideration will also be made in view of the Equality Act 2010 in our decision making and service delivery.

2.10 The behaviour that is covered by this policy on Anti-social behaviour also includes:

- 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.
- Conduct which consists of or involves using or threatening to use housing accommodation owned or managed by a relevant landlord for an unlawful purpose.
- Criminal activities at or in the locality of the accommodation
- Breaches of injunction orders
- Conduct capable of causing a housing-related nuisance and annoyance to any person

2.11 Examples of ASB include but are not limited to;

- Violence or threats of violence to any person.
- Abusive or insulting words or behaviour.
- Offensive behaviour under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Damage or threat of damage to property including graffiti.
- Intimidation and harassment including the targeting of groups because of their perceived differences.
- Domestic Abuse.
- Hate Crime
- Using or selling drugs or other illegal substances.
- Use of the property for unlawful purposes.
- Making an unreasonable level of noise by any means including shouting, slamming doors, operating tools or machinery or playing music, radio, television or other sound making equipment so as to annoy neighbours or anyone else in the locality.
- Allowing pets to make excessive noise, or to be a danger to others
- Fouling of public areas.
- Excessive accumulations of refuse or dangerous or polluting materials.
- Hoarding

(The above list is not exhaustive or exclusive).

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**3. SUPPORT OF COMPLAINANTS / WITNESSES AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 3.1 Saffron will ensure that complaints are dealt with promptly and that complainants are kept advised of and involved in the progress of a case. Witnesses will be referred to appropriate support agencies where necessary. Complainants will be advised of the range of options available to tackle ASB and will be given a named Saffron contact.
- 3.2 The identities of complainants will not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator without agreement of the complainant, (although in many circumstances this is often self-apparent due to the nature of a complaint). Disclosure of complainant details may subsequently be necessary for evidential purposes if legal action is to be undertaken but again, this will not be done without the complainant's consent.
- 3.3 If witnesses are required to attend Court to give evidence they will be supported in this by Saffron and will be accompanied by an appropriate staff member. Saffron will give consideration to the use of professional witnesses where appropriate.

**4. DOMESTIC ABUSE**

- 4.1 Saffron has a separate Domestic Abuse Policy to support victims of domestic abuse, but recognise that some reports of anti-social behaviour, including noise nuisance, could be an indicator of potential domestic abuse and/or safeguarding issues. We will ensure that any potential indicators for domestic abuse and/or safeguarding matters are actively considered as part of our ASB investigation and will take appropriate actions including raising safeguarding alerts in line with our policies and procedures and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

**5. MULTI AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS**

- 5.1 Saffron does not operate in isolation, but as a part of the local community and in partnership with other organisations and agencies working to tackle ASB. Saffron works with a range of organisations including, but not exclusively; the Police, Probation Service, Social Services, Councils, schools, Help Hubs, Health Services, Community Safety Partnerships, Operational Partnership Teams (OPTs) etc. in order to best address ASB and support sustainable communities. Saffron will continue its work in this area and will seek to develop further partnership arrangements.

**6. DATA PROTECTION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION**

- 6.1 This section is to be read in conjunction with Saffron's Data Protection Policy and privacy policy.
- 6.2 Saffron will not disclose information about tenants or leaseholders to anyone or use information about them for other purposes unless the law allows us to do so.

We reserve the right to make a referral to social services or to the Police without the permission of the victim, where the situation and the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 (and any other relevant legislation) justify it.

- 6.3 The information that is held by Saffron will only be used for Legal or our legitimate purposes. Saffron will not retain information provided in the course of an investigation which it does not consider to be relevant or necessary.
- 6.4 In cases where those requiring information maintain that Saffron is under a legal duty to supply it, Saffron will always confirm this prior to disclosure. Information requested under the relevant provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 will be supplied.

## **7. PREVENTION OF ANTI- SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

- 7.1 Saffron will seek to adopt practices which reduce the likelihood of the occurrence of ASB. This will include provision of clear advice to tenants on what constitutes ASB through Tenancy Agreements, information leaflets and Saffron News.
- 7.2 Saffron will work with communities to identify causes of Anti-Social behaviour and in conjunction with other agencies may seek to intervene at an early stage using measures such as community development projects (e. g youth work, training initiatives etc.) as a way of preventing Anti-Social Behaviour.
- 7.3 Other preventative measures will include;
- Use of Starter Tenancies.
  - Early intervention by contact, giving advice and signposting as necessary.
  - Sensitive lettings and Local Letting Plans
  - Post-tenancy visits.
  - Mediation services in conjunction with Good Neighbour agreements.
  - Multi-agency partnership working.
  - Restorative approaches.
  - Referral to Help Hubs and Tenancy Support Schemes.
  - Regular Estate Inspections

## **8. SIGNPOSTING OF ALLEGED PERPETRATORS**

- 8.1 Saffron will have regard to the fact that in some cases, incidents of ASB may be reduced if alleged perpetrators are encouraged to speak with other agencies who may be able to provide support in order to assist them to maintain their tenancy. If appropriate and consent is obtained, we will refer to and work with local councils Help Hubs, or any other similarly provide service when concerns are identified or disclosed.

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- 8.2 If tenants make significant or measurable positive changes which stop the Anti-social Behaviour from continuing, we are committed to supporting those tenants to enable them to reintegrate into the community and will work closely with local agencies in order to facilitate this.
- 8.3 By signposting alleged perpetrators to additional services, we may be able to prevent Anti-Social behaviour and in some cases, help the individual to achieve long term changes for the benefit of themselves and the community in which they live in.
- 8.4 The Community Trigger gives victims the right to require action is taken where an ongoing anti-social behaviour problem has not been addressed. This asks agencies such as the local council, police and housing providers to review collectively how they have responded, by conducting an anti-social behaviour Case Review. The Community Trigger/ASB case review can be applied for through Norfolk County Council by visiting [www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/anti-social-behaviour/community-trigger](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/anti-social-behaviour/community-trigger) or in Suffolk by contacting your local district or borough council

## **9. DISABLED TENANTS AND ASB**

- 9.1 In addressing ASB in circumstances where the perpetrator is disabled or may be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, Saffron will, wherever possible follow its policy and procedure relating to vulnerable individuals and, where appropriate, seek to work with other agencies as necessary in order to support the perpetrator to sustain their tenancy. Safeguarding consideration will be made.
- 9.2 When managing ASB caused by an individual who is disabled or may be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, Saffron will be mindful of duties which may arise by virtue of s149 Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 9.3 In cases where the perpetrator is disabled or may be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, Saffron will consider the proportionality of any legal action to be commenced and will undertake a full Impact Assessment.

## **10. OPTIONS FOR ACTION**

- 10.1 There are a variety of legal and non-legal actions that Saffron can take in respect of ASB cases. Saffron will decide what enforcement action is most appropriate on a case-by-case basis after considering the evidence available and whether it is necessary and proportionate.
- 10.2 If following an investigation, the complainant appears to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious, they will be informed of this finding. If their reports continue, the case will be dealt with in accordance to the organisation's vexatious or unreasonably persistent complainants' policy.

**11. HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION ACT**

11.1 As part of the Homelessness Reduction Act, Saffron have agreed to make referrals to Local Authorities where we are aware that any person, is threatened with homeless or could become homeless within the next 56 days as a result of a decision made by Saffron to instigate possession proceedings.

**12. PUBLICATION OF THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

12.1 The policy and procedures will be produced by Saffron and will be available on request and on its website.

**13. REVIEW**

13.1 Saffron will review its Anti-Social Behaviour policy every two years, involving consultation with tenants' representatives in line with our Customer Involvement and Consultation Policy and consultation with appropriate voluntary and statutory agencies.

13.2 Saffron recognises that there may be circumstances where it will need and/or wish to take different or alternative action to that outlined in this policy and it reserves the right to do so.

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<b>Executive Team</b>	Board
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<b>Officer</b>	Director of Tenant Services
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