

# **RESPECT** **STANDARD** **FOR HOUSING** **MANAGEMENT**

**A GUIDE FOR**  
**THE PUBLIC**



Department for  
**Communities and**  
**Local Government**

# WE WANT TO CREATE A CULTURE OF RESPECT WHERE YOU LIVE

## WHO IS THIS LEAFLET FOR?

This leaflet provides information on the Respect Standard for Housing Management for the general public. We have also produced a guide for landlords on the Standard available at [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk) that provides further detail.

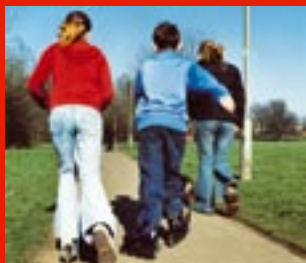
## WHAT IS THE RESPECT STANDARD?

The Standard is aimed at social landlords (local authority landlords and housing associations). A landlord who signs is making a public commitment to delivering good services to help stop anti-social behaviour and create a culture of respect. It is based on things that landlords and partners have done over the past few years which have had positive results.

## WHAT IS RESPECT?

Respect is about all of us being considerate to the needs of others around us, caring about the community, as well our own individual concerns.

People care when respect is disregarded and too many people still experience anti-social behaviour and feel that little can be done to stop it. A great deal can be done and it works. Social landlords play an important role, working with the community, the police and other services. They can help protect communities from anti-social behaviour and can help stop some of it from happening in the first place.



Housing officers work very closely with the community. People experiencing problems with anti-social behaviour often approach housing teams first with their concerns and complaints. When landlords get it right, with the full support of partners and the public, they can make a positive difference to the quality of life of residents and others in the community.

**SO WE WANT AS MANY LANDLORDS AS POSSIBLE TO SIGN UP TO THE STANDARD.**

### **WHAT'S IN THE STANDARD?**

The Standard consists of six commitments that any landlord who signs needs to deliver. To help make clear what each involves we have provided landlords with a list of activities which we would expect good landlords (and partners) to be carrying out.

Every place and case is different and so we do not expect landlords who sign up to the Standard to be carrying out every activity that we have listed. We do expect them to be doing most of them or to be doing other things which get results.

The pages in this leaflet give details of the six commitments and a brief summary of some of the things we expect landlords who sign to be delivering.



# **NOBODY KNOWS BETTER THAN THE COMMUNITY ABOUT WHAT IT WANTS AND NEEDS**

## **1 ACCOUNTABILITY, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMITMENT**

This is about landlords being committed to doing all they can to create a culture of respect. It's about them making a public commitment to the community and being transparent and accountable for what they do.

It's about making sure that everyone in the organisation understands what it takes to make a positive difference and are prepared to carry out what they promise. Strong leadership can make all the difference by searching for solutions rather than making excuses for avoiding action.

A strong commitment to working with partners (eg other landlords, the police and social services) is also very important. It's unreasonable to expect landlords to do everything as partners need to co-operate fully as well, but we do expect them to do all they can to make things work.

## **2 EMPOWERING AND REASSURING RESIDENTS**

Nobody knows better than the community about what it wants and needs. It's no use planning services around what you think people want without having asked them.

We expect landlords to communicate regularly with the community to let them know what's going on by holding regular meetings and circulating leaflets and newsletters.

Good landlords should be asking residents what problems they experience and take suggestions on how best to resolve them. For example a landlord might work with groups of residents in a neighbourhood or on an estate in order to establish a 'good neighbour agreement'. This sets out what the landlord will do to stop problems and what everyone in the community will do to ensure they respect their neighbours.



## **WE EXPECT GOOD LANDLORDS TO MAKE IT AS EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE TO KICK START ACTION**

### **4 TAILORED SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS AND PROVISION OF SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS & WITNESSES**

Many people find it stressful to bring forward complaints. Therefore landlords need to make it as easy as possible for people to kick start action by reporting incidents.

We expect good landlords to make it as easy as possible for people to make that first move. Once a complaint is registered people need ongoing support. This involves letting people know how a case is progressing and supporting them throughout.

This is especially important if court action takes place and a person is asked to give evidence. Everyone is different and needs tailored ongoing support. Where landlords can't offer full support themselves we expect them to work with partners to make sure it's available.

### **5 PROTECTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH SWIFT ENFORCEMENT**

Government has provided landlords with the tools they need to tackle a whole range of anti-social behaviour. This includes Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), injunctions and measures to take away security of tenure. We expect a good landlord to use them. Of course not every case requires this sort of response but some do.

Landlords need to understand how these tools work and use them at the right time to protect communities quickly. If people are to have faith that things can change they need to see that action is being taken to tackle unacceptable behaviour.



## **THE FIRST PRIORITY MUST ALWAYS BE TO PROTECT THE COMMUNITY FROM ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

Where measures are taken through the courts is important to make sure it is followed up. If someone breaches an ASBO or an injunction then this needs to be followed up by action to enforce that breach. Landlords can't do this by themselves but they can play a very important role by gathering and using evidence effectively.

### **6 SUPPORT TO TACKLE THE CAUSES OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

The first priority must always be to protect the community from anti-social behaviour. But we need solutions that work in the long term. Sometimes the best way of doing that, alongside taking firm action, is to offer support to people to change their behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour can stem from or be caused by family breakdown, lack of parenting skills, problems with drugs and alcohol and mental health issues. Support programmes can get to the root causes and put an end to behaviour that damages other's lives. They help people get back on track so everyone can look to a positive future.

Different people will require varying levels of support, ranging from regular visits from the housing officer or support worker through to intensive schemes (sometimes residential) where problems are complex or longstanding. We do not expect landlords to be able to carry out all these activities alone but we do expect them to work hard to deliver or facilitate these forms of help as required.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

We want the public to help take a stand against all types of anti-social behaviour in their community. If you are suffering with problems you should do what you can to tackle the problem – for example asking a neighbour to keep the noise down late at night. However where there are serious problems, or where problems continue you should report it to the relevant agency, (eg local council, police or your housing officer) so it so it can be stopped.

But there's lots more that you can do to tackle these issues and promote a culture of respect in your community. Here are a few ideas:

- Ask your landlord to sign up to the Respect Standard or work towards doing so.
- Attend public meetings and other events organised by your landlord to hold them to account for their performance against the Standard and to see what role you can play in tackling anti-social behaviour and building respect.
- Write an article for your local residents group, local newsletter or community magazine about promoting a culture of respect in your neighbourhood.
- If you are a member of a local community group, including a residents group, why not prompt a discussion at your next meeting on how you can promote the Respect agenda in your neighbourhood.
- Organise a community event to encourage your neighbours and others to get involved in promoting respect.
- Organise a community led clean up of your estate or a local park. Ask local services to work with you.

It is important to remember landlords can not do everything by themselves and require the help of partners and the community to ensure an effective response to tackle anti social behaviour.

If you have further questions on the Respect Standard you can contact the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) at [respectstandard@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:respectstandard@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

If you have questions on Respect generally you can obtain further information from the Respect Task Force at:

[www.respect.gov.uk](http://www.respect.gov.uk)



## **PUTTING THE COMMUNITY AT THE HEART OF THE AGENDA SO THAT LANDLORDS AND THE COMMUNITY WORK AS ONE**

This might involve organising an estate walk to record problems that need resolving like graffiti or fly tipping or a 'community clean up' day to improve the local environment.

It's also about putting the community at the heart of the agenda so that landlords and the community work as one. This should include celebrating and rewarding people who go the extra mile to make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.

### **3 PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION**

Some anti-social behaviour can be nipped in the bud. If problems are not dealt with quickly they often escalate. If early action isn't taken people who carry out anti-social behaviour feel they can get away with it leaving the rest of the community feeling helpless and disillusioned.

Where problems occur we expect landlords and partners to issue clear warnings and use tools such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) to warn people that if anti-social behaviour continues then tough action will follow.

A strong presence in the area (for example housing officer patrols, community support officers and wardens) can also act as an effective deterrent and reassures people that someone is looking out for them.

It's also about letting everybody know what standards of behaviour are acceptable from the start. For example explaining tenancy agreements when people sign so they are made aware of how important it is to respect their neighbours and the local environment.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further information on the Respect Standard for Housing Management is available from DCLG website:

**[www.communities.gov.uk/antisocialbehaviour](http://www.communities.gov.uk/antisocialbehaviour)**

Further copies of this guide,  
*Respect Standard for Housing Management –  
A Guide for Landlords*, Product code: 06HC04085/B and  
*Respect Standard for Housing Management –  
A Guide for the Public*, Product code: 06HC04085/A  
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