

# Good Neighbour Policy

Originator:	Regulatory Compliance Team
OVH Board Approval Date:	February 2025
Review date:	February 2028

1	Introduction
1.1	One Vision Housing (OVH) strives to be the best at everything it does including being the best provider of landlord services. Central to this, is the role that OVH plays in promoting harmonious neighbourhoods within the geographical areas where it owns and manages properties.
1.2	The aim of this Policy is to set out the behaviours OVH expects from its residents in order to promote cohesive communities.
1.3	This Policy helps OVH comply with its legislative requirements, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Housing Act 1996</li> <li>• Protection from Harassment Act 1997</li> <li>• Human Rights Act 1998</li> <li>• The Equality Act 2010</li> <li>• ASB, Crime &amp; Policing Act 2014</li> <li>• The UK Data Protection Act 2018</li> <li>• Domestic Abuse Act 2021</li> </ul>
1.4	The application of this Policy ensures compliance with the outcomes of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England, responsibility of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) as outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered providers must co-operate with relevant partners to promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they provide social housing</li> </ul>
1.5	<b>Access and Communication</b>
1.5.1	OVH is committed to ensuring that its services are accessible to everyone. OVH will seek alternative methods of access and service delivery where barriers, perceived or real may exist, that may make it difficult for people to work for OVH or use its services
1.5.2	Working with our customers we have established a Vulnerable Persons and Reasonable Adjustments Policy to ensure we make best use of every customer interaction to meet customers' needs in our service delivery and ensure this information is kept up to date.
1.6	<b>Equality, Diversity and Human Rights</b>

<p>1.6.1</p> <p>1.6.2</p> <p>1.6.3</p> <p>1.7</p>	<p>OVH is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following core strands of equality; Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Gender Identity / Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation and Religion and / or Belief.</p> <p>OVH also recognise that some people experience disadvantage due to their socio-economic circumstances, employment status, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.</p> <p>OVH will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation. OVH will endeavour to ensure its staff and others with whom it works, will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).</p> <p>This Policy should be read in line with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OVH Anti-Social Behaviour Policy</li> <li>• OVH Domestic Abuse Policy</li> <li>• OVH Harassment and Hate Crime Policy</li> <li>• OVH Responsible Pet Ownership Policy</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Statement of Intent</b></p>
<p>2.1</p> <p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p> <p>2.5</p> <p>2.6</p> <p>2.7</p>	<p>OVH will seek to promote good neighbourhoods and communities, where residents feel safe and can develop lasting roots.</p> <p>OVH will communicate its expectations of behaviour from the outset of the landlord / tenant relationship and throughout the period of the tenancy.</p> <p>OVH expects its customers to behave in a neighbourly manner i.e. being mindful of behaviours and actions which can cause annoyance whilst also showing reasonable tolerance of different lifestyles e.g. certain amount of disturbance that may result in noise transference between properties.</p> <p>OVH would also expect its customers to show respect for others and play their part in creating harmonious relationships by displaying a degree of community spirit e.g. looking out for those who may be vulnerable or who need support with everyday tasks, especially during difficult times such as periods of extreme weather.</p> <p>Where low level disputes or differences of opinion do to occur, OVH would expect its customers, where possible, to resolve these through amicable means e.g. through friendly discourse and compromise in the first instance.</p> <p>Where this not possible i.e. if the level of disturbance reaches the thresholds of anti-social behaviour OVH will apply the provisions available to it via its Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, when it becomes aware of or is informed of such issues.</p> <p>To play its part in promoting harmonious community relations OVH will continue to facilitate events and initiatives that bring people together such as ‘neighbourhood cafes’ and ‘community days of action’.</p>

### 3.1 OVH expectations of its customers

3.1.1 Whilst OVH aims to promote harmonious neighbourhoods / good relations between its customers and their neighbours (whatever their tenure maybe or if they are tenants of other landlords), it relies on the goodwill, co-operation and a degree of reasonable tolerance of different lifestyles of individuals to make this a reality.

3.1.2 OVH appreciates that there are certain aspects of general living where it is unavoidable to create some form of disturbance or mild annoyance to others and that these can be through day-to-day activities such as use of washing machines or other household devices, children playing or moving furniture.

3.1.3 OVH also appreciates that the ability to abide and tolerate these minor disturbances will depend on the individual and their particular circumstances.

3.1.4 Whilst it is unrealistic to expect no level of disturbance at all, OVH encourages its customers to be good neighbours, making places better to live for themselves and others by considering the following behaviours:

- **Being mindful of noise levels and transference**  
Whilst some level of noise creation is inevitable from modern living – a good neighbour would consider the levels of noise created and make best efforts to keep this within reasonable limits or by taking action to restrict the effects of noise transference. Good neighbours would also consider the times that noise is created and do their best to keep this within reasonable parameters e.g. not make unreasonable noise when others may be sleeping
- **Showing respect for others and use of common courtesies**  
Use of common courtesies such as saying ‘hello’ and being friendly can go a long way to being a good neighbour and can make the difference between a positive and a negative experience. A good neighbour would be mindful of their behaviours, those of other household members and their visitors and what impacts this may have on others or how it may be perceived. They should avoid saying or doing anything which antagonises others in any way and should treat others how they would wish to be treated themselves
- **Being respectful of property boundaries / condition and communal areas**  
Good neighbours should keep the condition of their property and the immediate surrounding areas such as gardens and communal pathways in a good condition in a way that does not interfere or cause annoyance to others and have respect for mutual property boundaries, including parking vehicles responsibly. They should report any repairs that are OVH’s responsibility to carry out in a timely fashion and allow OVH staff or others working on its behalf appropriate access to make good or carry out any essential compliance work e.g. annual gas safety checks. Good neighbours should be mindful of the impact of things that can traverse property boundaries such as smoke from outside fires, BBQ’s or smoking cigarettes / vaping and adopt a common-sense approach i.e. notifying neighbours when they are planning to have a BBQ or smoking away from open windows in neighbouring properties

- **Responsible pet ownership**

Good neighbours should keep pets under control, as far as is reasonably possible to prevent any disturbance to others. For further detail customers should refer to the OVH Responsible Pet Ownership Policy

- **Looking out for each other**

Whilst we would not expect customers to accept responsibility for the welfare of their neighbours in any way, a good neighbour would look for signs that people are potentially struggling and may need some additional support. This could include things that are out of the ordinary such as a sudden change in behaviour or if routines are broken. A good neighbour may try to make contact with a neighbour who may be vulnerable in any way if they have concerns about them and should let OVH or other agencies know of their concerns if they believe a neighbour is in any potential distress or needs additional support in any way

### 3.2 **Use of Good Neighbour Agreements**

3.2.1 To provide further clarity on the behaviours OVH expects its customers to adopt, it has developed a 'Good Neighbour Agreement'.

3.2.2 This agreement which can be issued to customers at the start of a tenancy or when they are experiencing low level disturbance with neighbours is not legally binding and is entered into completely voluntarily, by all parties.

3.2.3 The Good Neighbour Agreement will not be used in the case of any serious incidents. When any serious incident occurs, these will be dealt with under the terms of the residents' tenancy agreement and depending on the nature of the incident concerned may be dealt with via the provisions set out in:

- OVH Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- OVH Domestic Abuse Policy
- OVH Harassment and Hate Crime Policy
- OVH Responsible Pet Ownership Policy

3.2.4 On occasion, there may be vulnerabilities or additional needs involved that OVH is not able to disclose with neighbours. OVH will deal with these on a case-by-case basis.

3.2.5 When customers report issues of disturbance with neighbours or OVH becomes aware of such issues, it will adopt a 'triaging approach' to determine the most appropriate response and will only issue Good Neighbour Agreements when this is a sensible and reasonable course of action.

3.2.6 To obtain a copy of the Good Neighbour Agreement and find out more information, customers should contact OVH via:

- Telephone - **0300 365 1111**
- In writing to - One Vision Housing, PO Box 891, Orpington, BR6 1LY
- Email – [enquiries@ovh.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ovh.org.uk) or [communitysafetyteam@ovh.org.uk](mailto:communitysafetyteam@ovh.org.uk)

### 3.3 **OVH actions to promote good neighbourhoods**

<p>3.3.1</p> <p>3.3.2</p> <p>3.3.3</p>	<p>OVH recognise the responsibility it plays in creating and upholding positive neighbourhoods, and in doing so, making sure residents feel heard.</p> <p>By being active in the community and offering support, OVH aims to create a good relationship with its residents and in return, it expects residents to also play a part in fostering good relations in the community in order to make it a nicer place for all.</p> <p>OVH offer multiple forums for residents to get involved, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Customer Voice</b></li> <li>• Our Customer Voice team hold meetings with residents to gather feedback about OVH and the communities’ residents are living in. This is a way for residents to express any concerns or feedback on what further action OVH could be doing in the neighbourhoods it manages</li> <li>• <b>Days of Action</b></li> <li>• Days of Action entail OVH Neighbourhood Housing Officers conducting visits to neighbourhoods, carrying out door knocking exercises. This helps OVH gather information about issues that are affecting residents and ways OVH can deliver support. On some Days of Action skips are also provided as a way to combat fly tipping in the area and information provided about the local council’s item collection service. If residents do not feel comfortable providing information about issues they are facing, contact details are also provided so they can do so at times and in ways that are convenient to them</li> <li>• <b>Neighbourhood Cafes</b></li> <li>• OVH’s Neighbourhood Cafes bring the service directly to customers. These free events provide customers with the opportunity to speak to OVH directly regarding housing and tenancy support matters and any issues they may be facing in the community</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Implementation</b></p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>All staff have a responsibility to be aware of the Good Neighbour Agreement and the Good Neighbour Policy to be able to direct any customer enquiries that may arise.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Performance</b></p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p>There are no additional performance requirements as a result of this Policy.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Consultation</b></p>
<p>6.1</p>	<p>All OVH staff and customer representatives have been consulted in the development of this Policy.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Review</b></p>
<p>7.1</p>	<p>The Policy will be reviewed every Three Years from the date of Executive Management Team approval (or as near as possible) or more frequently if required by changes in legislation, regulation or as a result of system audits.</p>

<b>8</b>		<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	
8.1	Was a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	No	
8.2	When was EIA conducted and by who?	An EIA Relevance Test was conducted by the Policy and Strategy Administrator and Regulatory Compliance Manager in November 2024.	
8.3	Results of EIA	The Relevance Test did not indicate there are any differential or adverse impacts for any group with protected characteristics as a result of the operation of this Policy.	
<b>9</b>		<b>Scheme of Delegation</b>	
9.1	Responsible committee for approving and monitoring implementation of the Policy and any amendments to it	Executive Management Team	
9.2	Responsible officer for formulating Policy and reporting to committee on its effective implementation	Director of Housing and Customer Services	
9.3	Responsible officer for formulating, reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures	Director of Housing and Customer Services	
<b>10</b>		<b>Amendment Log</b>	
Date of revision:	Reason for revision:	Consultation record:	Record of amendments:
First version of this Policy – 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	N/A	See Section 6 above	N/A