Conflict Resolution Policy

Version: 2

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Appendix A: Version history

1. Introduction

The Conflict Resolution Policy (CRP) outlines how Connect will work with residents to build strong and positive relationships, so that when conflict arises it can be resolved in a constructive way.

Connect believes that everyone is entitled to quiet enjoyment of their home, without undue disruption and disturbance from others.

The CRP explains how Connect will work with residents to address conflict in accordance with the organisation's vision of a sustainable and just society, where good homes, neighbourhoods and opportunities help people enjoy happy, healthy lives.

The CRP also explains that Connect may at times not be able to resolve conflict, where resolution of conflict is dependent on residents' actions and behaviour changing or ceasing.

In cases where;

- the behaviour and/or actions are not of a nature to be covered by the ASB policy
- Connect has offered or used interventions detailed in the CRP and the behaviour/actions continue

In these situations, the case will be closed and no further action taken, unless the behaviour and/or actions continue and change in nature such that the triage factors indicate that the case should be dealt with under the ASB policy.

Connect's values will underpin the application of this policy in practice. Residents can expect Connect colleagues to:

- Put people first
- Love making a difference
- Actively listen and learn
- Collaborate creatively
- Earn trust through our actions

Connect will work with residents to resolve low level conflict and nuisance using the CRP. Where the issue is more serious, the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) policy will apply.

To prevent conflict occurring, Connect will make sure all residents know they have a responsibility to ensure that they don't act in a way that is likely to annoy or disturb their neighbours. They are also responsible for their pets, children, and visitors.

2. What behaviours and issues will be dealt with under the Conflict Resolution Policy

This policy covers behaviours that are causing someone a nuisance but that it would not be reasonable or appropriate to categorise as ASB. These behaviours can still cause a great deal of upset and frustration and create tension and division between neighbours and the wider community.

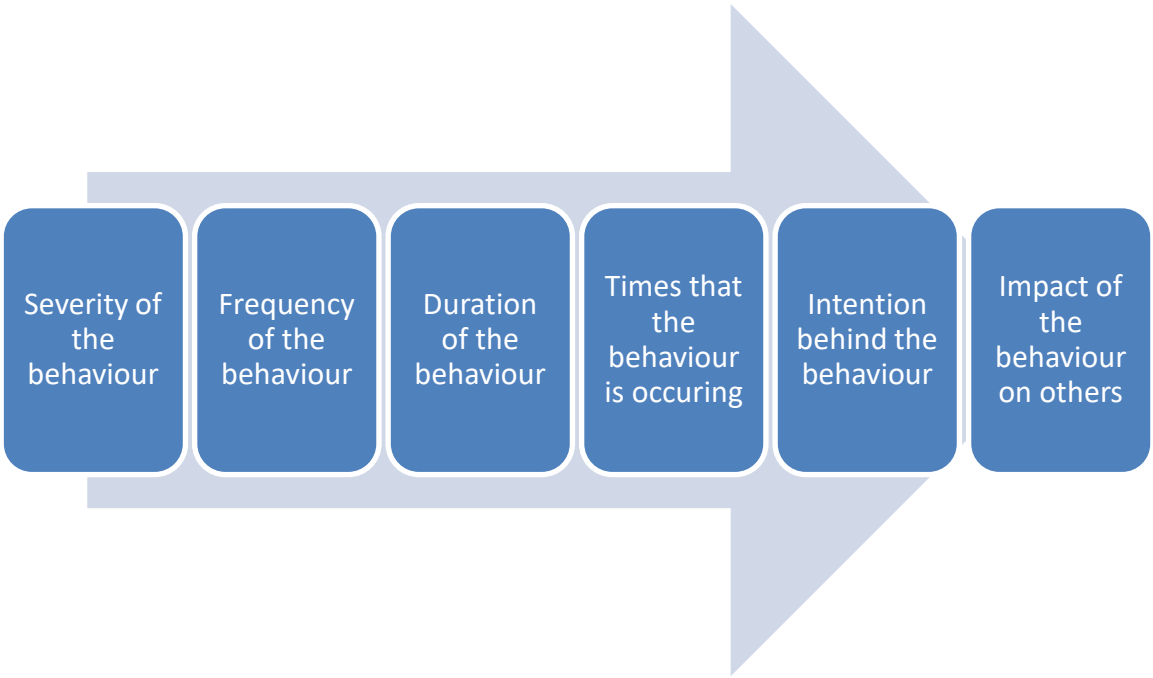
Examples of behaviours that will be dealt with under the Conflict Resolution Policy

- Young people gathering socially or children playing
- Smoking and vaping, including the non-medicinal smoking of cannabis (see separate procedure for medicinal use) unless additional factors involved mean it's more appropriate to escalate to ASB policy
- Issues with parking where there are no designated spaces or contravention of legislation
- Cooking smells
- Day to day household noise such as low-level TV noise, opening and closing doors, noise from other household appliances, noise from children playing or crying, flushing of toilets and vacuuming as some examples
- Occasional nuisance for example one off parties and celebrations,
- Occasional dog barking
- DIY during reasonable hours
- Personal differences for example where children have fallen out with each other and disputes between families not involving any aspects of the behaviour listed as being classed as ASB
- Positioning of bins
- Boundary issues
- Use of communal areas

This is not an exhaustive list but illustrates some of the issues that can cause conflict and tensions in neighbourhoods.

To address behaviour that is causing annoyance and conflict, but that is not ASB, Connect will respond by using tools and approaches set out in this policy and associated procedures.

When deciding whether behaviour is to be addressed under the CRP or ASB policy consideration is given to the following factors – referred to in this document as the 'triage factors'.



These factors will be assessed at the initial report stage and used to decide if the case will be dealt with under the CRP or ASB policy. It will be clearly communicated to the person raising the concern which approach will be used to manage the case.

We recognise that behaviour can change in severity and that something that may initially have seemed appropriate to be dealt with under the CRP can evolve into ASB. We will reassess each case being dealt with under the CRP whenever a new report is received, using the 'triage factors', making sure that cases are escalated where it's appropriate to do so.

As this policy aims to develop and strengthen relationships and empower residents to resolve conflicts themselves, we need the co-operation and support of those involved. Where Connect does not get that co-operation and support, for example where residents refuse to a reasonable request such as taking part in mediation, then Connect may not be able to assist any further. Where this is

the case, this will be clearly communicated to the residents involved and the case closed.

The CRP does not intend to find fault or apportion blame, and for this reason we are therefore extremely unlikely to consider legal actions as a response to our involvement in matters dealt with under this policy.

Connect will be objective and work with all parties to find practical solutions when addressing cases using the CRP.

In following this approach Connect will not focus on who is right or wrong in any given situation.

Connect will use language that supports this and will not use words like perpetrator or victim. When managing a case under the CRP policy we will refer to the residents involved using their name and address.

This policy deliberately uses the word 'resident' throughout. This is because Connect recognises that

- There are different types of tenure across Connects housing stock – tenants, leaseholders and licensees
- Conflict may arise because of the behaviour of members of the household that are not tenants
- Conflict may impact across tenures, e.g. may be a mix of Connect tenants, other social landlord tenants, private rented tenants and owner occupiers

For this policy the term resident refers to all the above.

Where the nuisance or conflict is caused by someone who is not a Connect resident then the ability to apply this policy is limited. In this situation Connect will work in partnership with those with the powers to act.

3. Timescales for case management

Connect will use a 'case management' approach with clear timescales. There are 5 stages in this approach:

- Report Stage
- Investigation Stage
- Decision Stage
- Monitoring Stage

- Closure Stage

Within **5 working days of initial report** – we will contact the reporter and start an investigation to gather evidence and establish objectively what is happening.
Within **10 working days** - we will have completed the investigation stage. If more time is needed this will have been communicated to the reporter with an explanation of why.
Within **5 days of completing the investigation stage** - a decision will have been made about what action is appropriate and communicated that to the reporter and subject.

The monitoring stage will be agreed with the reporter as this will vary depending on the circumstances of the case.

More details about these stages and the associated timescales can be found in the CRP procedure document.

4. Noise

Any report of noise nuisance will be dealt with initially under the Conflict Resolution Policy. An action plan will be mutually agreed to reduce the noise if possible and lessen its impact.

Whilst recording noise would usually only be applicable to establish evidence in an ASB case, should a resident wish to record noise in a case that is being managed under the CRP then the Noise App will be made available to the resident to use. If the resident is unable to use the Noise App alternative methods will be discussed and agreed.

Where it is established that the noise nuisance constitutes ASB, using the triage factors, then the case would be then be managed as a case under the ASB policies and procedures.

5. Parking and abandoned and untaxed vehicles

Parking can often be the cause of conflict and tension between neighbours and in communities.

The legal position is that parking outside someone's home is legal unless the parked car blocks a driveway. If a car is blocking a drive and parked on a public highway then it is the Local Authority that has the power to act (Traffic Management Act 2004). Where the parking would fall into the category of 'nuisance and obstruction' offences it is the Police that have the power to act (Traffic Management Act 2004).

The Police and Local Authority have limited resources so Connect will support residents to resolve parking disputes themselves.

Parking issues will be dealt with under the CRP unless the 'triage factors' indicate it should be escalated to the ASB approach. When dealing with parking under the ASB Policy, Connect will work in partnership with the Police and Local Authority to address the situation.

Abandoned and untaxed vehicles can make the area look unsightly, contribute to low level nuisance and pose a potential hazard. Abandoned and untaxed vehicles will be dealt with under the Abandoned and untaxed vehicles procedure.

6. Identifying any support needs

During the Investigation Stage Connect colleagues will seek to understand whether any of the people involved have any unmet support needs.

Where there are unmet needs identified then Connect will aim to signpost residents to appropriate agencies, whether these are statutory services or third sector agencies.

Examples of unmet needs may be

- Poor mental health such as anxiety or depression
- Diagnosed mental health conditions such as paranoia or schizophrenia
- Need for support around parenting
- Dealing with anger, grief, or trauma
- Drug and/or alcohol dependency

7. How will Connect work with residents to resolve issues dealt with under the Conflict Resolution Policy

As part of the Decision Stage Connect will agree with residents the appropriate approach to take in the circumstances.

The CRP procedure outlines various options in more detail, but in summary they are

- Good Neighbour Agreements
- Bring to your attention cards
- Mediation
- Referral to agencies/support
- Conflict coaching

8. Concerns raised in an unacceptable manner

A resident may be experiencing distressing circumstances, that Connect is not able to resolve. This may mean that they make repeated requests to investigate the same or similar issue that Connect has investigated already.

If a resident's behaviour is demanding or persistent such that it impacts on the level of service that can be offered to others, then reference will be made to the Complaints and Compliments policy and the approach outlined in the 'Complaints made in an unacceptable manner' applied.

The decision to apply the approach outlines in the Complaints and Compliments policy will be taken by either the Neighbourhood Manager - Community Safety, Neighbourhood Manager – Lettings & Leasehold Lead or the Head of Customer and Community Services.

9. Appeals

Should a resident be unhappy with the outcome of a CRP case, they can appeal within 14 days of the decision being communicated to them. Appeals should be addressed to the Neighbourhood Manager – Lettings and Leasehold Lead.

On receipt of an Appeal the Neighbourhood Manager – Lettings & Leasehold Lead, or in their absence, the Head of Customer and Community Services or Director of Customer and Community Services will review the case and either uphold or overturn the decision.

Appeals can be made by telephone, email or in writing. Decisions on Appeals will be made within 14 days of receipt, and the appeal decision will be communicated in writing.

If a resident is dissatisfied with the outcome of a Conflict Resolution case, this should be raised via the appeals procedure in the first instance. Connect does have a separate formal complaints procedure; however, formal complaints relating to Conflict Resolution outcomes - where the complaint has not been through the appeal procedure - will be dealt with as an appeal.

10. Partnership working, Neighbourhood Plans and community-based solutions

When dealing with issues under this policy, Connect will consider whether the best approach would be to work in partnership with others to reach a solution.

Connect seeks to move decision making, power and influence closer to those living in neighbourhoods and uses co-production as a key methodology to do this. Neighbourhood plans are one tool used to do this on a local level, agreeing priorities with residents and agreeing and working on solutions together and in partnership with other agencies and services. Where appropriate, issues highlighted through the investigation of cases under this policy will feed into Neighbourhood Plans and solutions co-designed with residents.

11. Information sharing and confidentiality

When investigating CRP cases, Connect will respect the privacy and confidentiality rights of the individuals involved. Connect will process and share information with external agencies, in accordance with the Association's privacy

statement, Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations (UKGDPR).

The privacy statement can be viewed in full here on Connect's website: Customer Privacy Statement 2024.

The privacy statement outlines that we will share and exchange information with statutory and non-statutory agencies when investigating CRP cases. It also explains that Connect will also share appropriate information with statutory agencies that may come to light during the investigation of a CRP case where we have reason to believe that there are safeguarding concerns, or where someone may be at risk.

Connect will use the powers made available under s115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to access information to support the organisation in the investigation CRP cases and may use information gained via s.115 requests as evidence in legal action if a CRP case escalates to be dealt with under the ASB policy.

Connect will also, where appropriate, enter into Data Sharing Agreements with the appropriate organisations and agencies to allow Connect to effectively investigate CRP cases.

12. Service Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

The Neighbourhood Manager – Lettings & Leasehold Lead will conduct quarterly quality checks and produce a quarterly report to provide full assurance that cases are being dealt with in line with the Conflict Resolution Policy and procedures. These quality checks will be reviewed by the Head of Customer and Community Services and service improvements and lessons learnt identified and implemented.

Connect will ensure that staff are appropriately trained in the Conflict Resolution Policy and procedures.

Connect will gather feedback from residents once a case is closed via a follow up survey and the results from these will be included in the quarterly audit report and inform continuous service improvement in conflict resolution.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. Any proposed changes to the service offer, policy or procedure would be co-designed with residents and key stakeholders using appropriate methods as part of the review process.

Appendix

A: Version History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
Version 1	February 2025	New Policy
Version 2	October 2025	Changes to job title, appeals section added
Version 3	July 2026	Policy updated with clarified timescales -no change to timescales just wording made clearer