



# **Noise Policy**

**December 2025**

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1 – Noise Diagnostic Tool**

## 1. Introduction and Scope

- 1.1 SW9 Community Housing (SW9 CH) believe everyone has the right to the peaceful enjoyment of their home. The impact of noise transference can affect each of us differently and the way we manage noise complaints should reflect this. This policy will cover noise nuisance which is not considered as a direct result of Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) or something that could be determined as deliberate. Each case will be dealt with on an individual case basis to determine if it is deliberate and is covered under our Anti-social Behaviour Policy. This Noise Policy will cover the following household noise:
- Everyday living noise where the level of transference is increased due to a lack of appropriate flooring such as carpet with underlay, or where hardwood or laminate flooring has been laid and this has magnified the noise transference between floors.
  - Where the use of appliances, including washing machines and exercise machines, create additional noise during the hours of 10pm and 7am.
  - Where the level of noise is such that it is having a detrimental impact on health and wellbeing.
- 1.2. Any noise nuisance complaints which have been accepted as ASB will not be dealt with within this policy. Where the effect of noise is such that it is having a detrimental impact on mental health or where there are known vulnerabilities then this policy will be observed alongside our Safeguarding Policy and procedures. We will not enforce on one off family event days and celebrations, but we would expect residents to act in a considerate manner and where practical, advise their immediate neighbours in advance of any social gathering.
- 1.3. Noise from neighbouring homes is sometimes an unavoidable part of living within a community. We will consider each report on its individual merits and take proportional action where appropriate, although it may not always be possible to resolve every report to the satisfaction of all parties.
- 1.4 This policy has been created as a considered response to the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS), "Spotlight on Noise Complaints" published in October 2022. It applies to anyone living in or visiting a property managed by SW9 CH and includes all tenants, leaseholders, shared owners, employees, contractors and any other relevant parties.

## 2. Aim and Objectives

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that SW9 CH follow best practice and manage resident expectation in responding to noise complaints which do not fall within the definitions of ASB but, may meet the statutory noise threshold because it is something which interferes with the average person's use of or enjoyment of their home or be harmful to health.

The key objectives of this policy are intended to:

- Ensure we comply with all legal and regulatory requirements and standards, including those under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Noise Act 1996.
- Make clear which responsibilities and accountabilities lie with SW9 CH, Sovereign Network Group, and the local authority when dealing with reports of noise.

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- Encourage residents to consider the impact their lifestyle may have on their neighbours and to also have consideration of cultural differences, also giving regard to both physical and mental health challenges.
- Manage resident expectations, in relation to response and timescales, to treat residents fairly and investigate a noise complaints promptly, fairly and consistently.
- Triage the initial report to ensure that the correct policies and procedures are followed and inform the resident how we will respond to their report.
- Consider when to make reasonable adjustments to our services; this is supported by our Reasonable Adjustment Policy.
- Promote awareness of acceptable noise levels and encourage good neighbourhood relationships and behaviour.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to complainants and others affected by the situation.

### 3. Policy Statement

- 3.1. SW9 CH recognise that ongoing noise transference can have a significant impact on quality of life and wellbeing. We are committed to adopting a proactive good neighbourhood management strategy which demonstrates a considered, appropriate and proportionate response to complaints of noise nuisance within the statutory frameworks and compliance of Building Regulations Part E.
- 3.2. There is no legal requirement for housing associations to improve the sound insulation between properties.
- 3.3. SW9 CH may use its discretion, when determining whether to install sound insulation in properties. The following criteria will be used:
- Medical factors
  - Information received from outside agencies
  - Vulnerability
  - Surveyors report
- 3.4. Where noise levels are recognised as statutory noise under S79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and we have taken appropriate and proportionate action, then responsibility for enforcement would sit with the local authority. In this instance, we would share information and would work in partnership with the local authority who would become the lead partner agency.

### 4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Noise nuisance - ASB	Noise nuisance which is considered as a direct result of anti-social behaviour or something that could be determined as deliberate.
Noise nuisance	Where the cause of noise falls outside a deliberate act but the effect of which is such that it is having a detrimental impact on mental health and wellbeing.
Statutory nuisance	For an issue to be considered under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 it must either; unreasonably and substantially interfere with the use or

Term	Definition
	enjoyment of a home or other premises or; injure health or be likely to injure health. This would be managed under the ASB Policy.
Building Regulations Part E	This came into force in the UK in 2003. It prescribes acoustic insulation levels for new and converted residential buildings. These standards do not apply to any home built, or converted, before 2003 and landlords are under no obligation to soundproof homes to meet the standard introduced in 2003.
Noise app	For the use on smart phones or ipads/android tablets it gives a simple way to capture noise that is disturbing you and report it safely and securely to your landlord The Noise App - Report Noise Nuisance <a href="#">Using the Noise App   SNG</a>

**Below are some examples of types of noise nuisance and how they would be managed. This is NOT an exhaustive list;**

Noise Type	Noise Nuisance	ASB
Washing machine	x	
Family living noise	x	
Doors slamming	x	
Dogs barking	x	x
Frequent parties		x
Loud TV	x	

Those with an 'x' in both columns would be initially investigated and resident advised which policy would apply. The extent to which any action or intervention would be offered would consider the frequency and times of incidents and the degree of noise transference experienced.

## 5. Reporting Noise Nuisance

- 5.1. Before reporting noise nuisance we ask the resident to refer to our anti-social behaviour toolkit on our website to consider whether the source of noise is "conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person; conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person" as defined by the Crime and Policing Act 2014 Section 2 (1). If this is the case, then noise nuisance allegations will be dealt with under our Anti-social behaviour Policy.
- 5.2. If the issue is 'everyday living' noise and is having a detrimental impact on wellbeing, we will investigate the matter if:
  - The noise has persisted over 3 months and evidence can be provided either recorded as noise nuisance on 6 separate occasions over a 6-week period via the Noise App or with 3 completed sets of Nuisance Logs (6 weeks).

- 5.3. These matters will be reviewed to determine whether any reasonable measures can be taken to help mitigate the issues. Where poor noise insulation is identified as a contributing factor, SW9 CH may consider proportionate adjustments, such as the use of anti-vibration mats, where feasible.
- 5.4. To assist with our investigation, we will require full cooperation by those reporting to us. This includes providing evidence of the type of noise nuisance, which can be through utilising the Noise app recordings or keeping Incident log sheets, which are both explained and accessed through our/SNG's website. These help identify specific patterns of noise disturbance which may guide our actions and response. Where the source of the noise can be identified and relates to a neighbouring household, the complainant will be encouraged to speak to the householder who may not be aware that they are causing a problem. Sometimes talking has a better outcome than when matters are made more official.
- 5.5. With all reports of this type, we will notify the household where they are alleged to be causing noise disturbance. We will send guidance on things they can do to reduce the transference of noise, such as lay rugs, stick felt pads to furniture legs, etc.
- 5.6. On rare occasions noise complaints are because of poor sound insulation within communal areas so can be attributed to multiple households. In this situation we will write to the whole block.

## **6. Investigation**

- 6.1. The purpose of any investigation is to address the source of the noise where possible. In the majority of situations this will be evident from the resident. We will:
- Identify the location of the source of noise with the resident.
  - Using evidence gathered, such as noise app recordings and/or Incident Logs we will determine how long the noise issue has been apparent and the duration/times of day it has a greater impact, if identifiable. Generally, we will only consider day to day noise nuisance outside of the hours of 22:00 to 07:00.
  - Review housing management systems for previous reports of noise nuisance to assist with investigations. This may include reviewing whether other properties within the same block/locality have previously had issues.
  - Identify the type and level of noise and what it is about the noise that is causing the disturbance, such as frequency, duration, times, etc.
  - Check the property from where the noise is emanating to identify flooring type. Where this is anything other than carpet, discuss options for reducing noise transference. In extreme cases we may require hardwood or laminate flooring be lifted, as per our tenancy agreements. Where a tenant refuses to remove the flooring, we will consider taking legal action. We will make recommendations to lay additional rugs, place pads under furniture, anti-vibration mats etc as appropriate as per our Reducing Housing Noise Leaflet.
  - Try to establish whether this is an isolated case or whether there are other issues which may make the levels of noise more intolerable for the individual resident(s).

## **7. Actions**

- 7.1. The outcome of investigations must evidence that the degree of noise disturbance has a significant effect on the resident which ultimately effects the quiet enjoyment of their home. Where there are no statutory breaches, whilst managing resident expectations, we will take all reasonable and proportionate steps to alleviate the issue. With regards to Building Regulations Part E, we will not undertake any major works to improve acoustic insulation levels unless it is part of a wider investment programme.

- 7.2. To find a satisfactory resolution we will be clear to residents if their case is being managed under the Noise Policy.
- 7.3. Where most of the noise is during the day, request that officers visit, subject to availability, to witness this. In extreme circumstances we may offer an out of hours professional witness visit.
- 7.4. Once Incident logs or noise recordings have been reviewed by the case officer, consider mediation. This will depend on the noise nuisance and severity. We will always expect residents to collaborate with us to support any dispute resolution.
- 7.5. When the type of noise nuisance is determined to be general daily living noise exacerbated by poor sound insulation, investigate the flooring type and negotiate or enforce the replacement to carpet wherever practical.
- 7.6. Where evidence is inconclusive, SW9 CH will assess each case on its individual circumstances. Work in partnership with the local authority to either explore the use of noise monitoring equipment, prior to installation, or seek their support to serve warnings if applicable.
- 7.7. Recognise that as individuals we all have different levels of noise tolerance. We will take this into account but where there is no obvious solution, we will manage resident expectations, considering any known vulnerabilities.
- 7.8. With residents consent we may refer reporting resident to Mental Health Liaison or Safeguarding process.
- 7.9. Work to support the household where they have been identified as the source of noise transference issues, specifically considering the circumstances which attribute to the noise and providing support, advice and guidance as necessary. We will take a resident focussed approach. Working with the resident who makes the report and the alleged householder, we aim to reach agreed actions, timescales and ultimately closure. Except in very serious cases, our initial intervention aims to stop the issue escalating. We recognise that early intervention is important to stop this.
- 7.10. Work with partner agencies, such as Environmental Health or external support agencies.
- 7.11. In exceptional circumstances, consider taking enforcement action against the source of the noise, such as residents who unreasonably fail to cooperate or are in breach of their tenancy or lease.
- 7.12. When a property has been identified as being susceptible to noise nuisance, the Neighbourhood Officer will add a note on our housing management system to flag up for future void consideration. For example, on 'Property Element' create a note to read "Property has had issues with noise transference – carpets to be left or fitted."

## 8. Closure of case

- 8.1. All cases will be reviewed on at least a bi-weekly for details of actions and resident interactions recorded on Customer Hub. A case will be closed when:
  - A thorough investigation has been undertaken and actions recorded.
  - All reasonable, fair and proportionate actions by SW9 CH have been concluded.
  - Where there are no reasonable actions that can be taken, this is communicated to the resident and the reasons why.
  - We have provided feedback to any other residents who have been implicated advising them of the outcome.

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## 9. Compliance and Monitoring

- 9.1. This policy is to support staff to manage delicate, often complex, complaints of noise nuisance and to provide the tools with which to work. The policy will inform residents of our commitment to recognising noise nuisance, particularly where there is poor noise insulation, and managing expectations of what can be achieved.
- 9.2. We may use publicity in successful actions to:
- Increase community confidence
  - Encourage others to be more considerate of their neighbourhoods and the impact on their behaviours
  - Inform stakeholders of our actions.
- 9.3. The team will monitor noise reports and report upwards within the organisation when required.

## 10. Complaints

- 10.1. Any tenant, leaseholder, or other stakeholder who is dissatisfied with how we have managed the report against our policy, is able to submit a complaint using our Complaints process. Once our Complaints policy is complete and if they remain dissatisfied then they can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service.

## 11. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
SW9 CH Board	Ultimate responsibility for determining and directing SW9 CH's response to noise reports.
Head of Customer Services	Responsibility and ownership to develop, implement and maintain the Noise Policy and associated procedures.
Neighbourhoods/Leaseholder Team	Work in partnership to implement noise control measures in their areas of responsibility.  Work to manage resident expectations and promote good neighbour relationships.

## 12. Equality and Diversity

- 12.1. We will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 12.2. We can tailor our service to meet most resident's needs. We will always consider specific resident vulnerabilities and how the noise nuisance affects their specific situation when responding to complaints. Any adjustments will also be considered in alignment with the Reasonable Adjustments Policy. Residents living with mental health diagnosis can be referred to the Mental Health Liaison Team.



### 13. Related documents

- Antisocial Behaviour Procedure
- Antisocial Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Compliance Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

### 14. Legislation and regulation

14.1. The legislation listed in this policy is not intended to cover all legislation applicable to this policy. To comply with clause 1.1 of the Regulator of Social Housing's Governance and Financial Viability Standard, which requires adherence to all relevant law, SW9 CH will take reasonable measures to ensure compliance with all applicable legislation by reviewing policies and procedures and amending them as appropriate. Any queries relating to the applicable legislation should be directed to the policy owner.

14.2. We will meet our legal obligations under the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Regulator of social housing – neighbourhood and community standard
- Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Report on Noise Complaints 2022

### 15. Review

15.1. This document will be reviewed every 3 years, or sooner if significant changes occur in the relevant legal or operational landscape.

<b>Policy author:</b>	Vanessa Cole, Policy and Performance Officer
<b>Policy owner:</b>	Kellie Carson, Head of Services Customer
<b>Adopted from Network Homes: y/n</b>	Yes
<b>Review schedule (1, 2 or 3 years):</b>	3 years

### Change Record

Date	Reviewed by (name and title)	Version	Summary of changes
05/11/2025	Kellie Carson, Head of Customer Services	V1.0	Complete review of policy with SLT.

## Appendix 1 – Noise Diagnostic Tool

In establishing whether a noise complaint will be managed under the ASB policy or Noise Policy we will use the following simple tool as a guide.

Noise diagnostic tool - ASB or Neighbourhood Management?	Yes	No
Is the noise between 11pm and 7am?	5	0
Is the noise happening regularly?	5	0
Is the noise damaging your health? (or anyone else in your household)	5	0
Is the noise related to substance misuse?	5	0
Is the noise caused by domestic appliances (washing machine), animals or children under 10?	-5	0
<b>Score of &gt;15 = ASB Case</b>		
<b>Score of &lt;15 = Neighbourhood Management Case</b>		