

# Golden Lane Housing



## Unreasonable Behaviour Policy

**Date: June 2024**

# Unreasonable Behaviour Policy

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## 1. Purpose of this Policy

This policy provides a consistent approach to responding to customers who behave in an unacceptable or unreasonable way and sets out the actions we may take. This policy also covers third parties action on the behalf of customers.

The policy is designed to provide flexibility to tackle unacceptable behaviour in whatever form it takes and whenever it occurs to ensure the safety and wellbeing of Golden Lane housing employees and those who work on our behalf.

Golden Lane Housing treats all customers as individuals. We want to make it as easy as possible for our customers to contact us and we commit to treat everyone fairly, be friendly and listen.

There are many reasons why customers can act unreasonably, including:

- Being unreasonable due to circumstances unknown or unrelated to Golden Lane Housing
- During times of stress, anxiety or distress
- Having mental health support needs which can make communication difficult or giving the appearance of being aggressive. People with a learning disability may have difficulty communicating and expressing frustrations.
- Language barriers that mean communication is not clear or easily understood by either party.
- When they are unhappy with a service provided by Golden Lane Housing.

The policy applies to all contact including face-to-face, telephone and online interactions, including all forms of social media, which may directly or indirectly refer to colleagues or Golden Lane Housing.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with Golden Lane Housing's Complaints Policy, and Anti-Social Behaviour policy.

## **2. Policy Details**

Golden Lane Housing classes behaviour as being unacceptable or unreasonable when a customer prevents, for example, a member of staff, or someone representing Golden Lane Housing, from delivering a service to customers in a fair and proportionate way.

Examples of unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour include:

1. Aggressive or abusive behaviour
2. Unreasonable demands
3. Unreasonable levels of contact
4. Harassment
5. Refusal to co operate

### **1. Aggressive or abusive behaviour**

We understand that customers can become angry and upset, particularly when they are experiencing upsetting or distressing circumstances. However Golden Lane Housing will not tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour towards its employees or people working on behalf of Golden Lane Housing.

All incidents of violence or abuse (physical, threatening behaviour or offensive, discriminative, racist or derogatory language) will be investigated on an individual basis and where necessary appropriate and proportionate action will be taken.

### **2. Unreasonable demands**

A customer's demand becomes unreasonable when Golden Lane Housing or those that work on our behalf are prevented from delivering a service to customers in a fair and equal way.

For example:

- Repeatedly demanding actions or responses within an unreasonable timescale.
- Raising unrelated issues or repeatedly changing the points of complaint.
- Refusing to accept a decision where explanations have been provided.

### **3. Unreasonable levels of contact**

This can occur when the volume or duration of customer contacts impact our ability to provide a service. For example:

- A number of calls or written contact over a short period of time.
- Repeated long telephone calls – discussing the same information or irrelevant topics.
- When colleague time required to talk on the phone, review information or respond is excessive and therefore impacts our ability to provide a service to others.
- Providing high volumes of information by email, phone or post.

- Making excessive contact during the course of us dealing with an issue that has been raised.
- Raising the same points with various members of staff to illicit an alternative response

#### **4. Harassment**

We prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues. We kindly request that all staff members be treated with respect when contacting us. Examples of harassment include:

- Publishing recorded telephone conversations
- Contacting our staff using their personal details or social media channels.
- Publishing any personal information about our colleagues.
- Repeatedly contacting them after they have dealt with your query

#### **5. Refusal to co operate**

We ask that tenants and their support/families work with us to help resolve issues and ensure that our services meet their individual needs.

However, there are some occasions when co-operation is refused, for example:

- Not providing additional information, evidence or comments within a reasonable timescale.
- Not making reasonable arrangements to be available for appointments.
- Refusing to summarise concerns or repeatedly adding new issues to the complaint.

#### **Actions we may take in resolving unreasonable or unacceptable behaviour**

When we experience behaviour or demands which are unacceptable or unreasonable, we may consider taking action. Any action we do take will be proportionate to the severity of the individual case and following an investigation into each case and agreed by a manager or senior colleague.

If we decide to take action, we will communicate our decision to the customer according to their communication needs and in writing. All customers will be given the right to appeal this decision.

#### **Examples of informal actions we will consider:**

- Warning the customer about their behaviour and requesting that the customer modifies their behaviour in future contact with us. This will be recorded on our system.
- Arrange to visit the property in pairs
- Add a system alert to the property account

#### **Examples of formal actions we may take:**

- Communicating only in writing or via a representative
- Stop all communication with a customer

- Taking actions under our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy (one for us to talk about – our policy is not aimed at colleagues but tenants towards other tenants)
- In liaison with the Anti-Social Behaviour, applying for an injunction to protect colleagues where behaviour includes threats of violence, actual violence or hate crime.
- Restricting or limiting contact with Golden Lane Housing.
- Restrict face to face visits.
- In exceptional circumstances, notifying relevant public authorities or pursuing legal action.

In the event of serious and major incidents, a warning marker will be added to a customer's records and reviewed on a timely basis in order to protect Golden Lane Housing colleagues from similar incidents.

If a customer wishes to appeal the decision of formal action under this policy must appeal within 15 working days of receiving notification of the decision. The Head of Tenant Experience or in their absence, a senior manager, will review and respond to the appeal within 15 working days. The action will remain in place during this time, and until a final decision has been determined.

### **3. Reasonable Adjustments**

Golden Lane Housing recognises the needs of a diverse population and always acts within the scope of its own Equality and diversity policy, the Human Rights Act 1998, and Equalities Act 2010.

To help customers who may find it difficult to communicate clearly, we ask that they tell us what reasonable adjustments would help.

We will always consider any requests made.

Examples we can consider include:

- Providing written information in an alternative format i.e. braille, audio, easy read
- Communicating in a way that meets an individual's needs i.e. in person and where possible at a location that is accessible, with the person's representative or support, providing support through an interpreter.

### **4. Data protection**

In managing unacceptable behaviour in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 and Data Protection Act 2018, we will adopt a fair and robust approach to recording and monitoring information about our customers while ensuring we maintain the safety of our colleagues.

## 5. Support for colleagues

We are committed to protecting the health and wellbeing of our colleagues. We will investigate and take appropriate and necessary action when incidents of unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour are reported to us.

This policy supports colleagues and provides guidance on steps to take in different scenarios involving unreasonable behaviour – this guidance is supported by the Housing Ombudsman and can be found here - [advice-cards-with-bookmarks-website](#)

We will ensure that all colleagues and managers are familiar with this policy to ensure it is used appropriately.

## 6. Monitoring and review

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