

Good Neighbour Approach

Purpose

This policy outlines how Bridge Housing supports neighbourhood harmony and positive relationships between neighbours, including celebrating positive neighbourly behaviour. It also explains how Bridge Housing manages neighbourhood disputes.

Scope

This policy applies to tenants, approved household occupants, visitors, and former tenants of Bridge Housing (we, our, us). It also applies to neighbours, property owners and stakeholders who have complaints regarding the behaviour of tenants, occupants, and visitors of our housing portfolio.

Policy Overview

Under the [NSW Residential Tenancies Act \(2010\)](#), all tenants have the right to peaceful enjoyment of their property and to live in peace and harmony with their neighbours. We will take all reasonable steps as a social housing landlord to ensure this.

We also provide opportunities to promote a positive relationship between neighbours and the ability to resolve issues or problems when they arise. We do this through our community engagement programs and adopting a proactive tenancy management approach. This includes holding Good Neighbour workshops, [Block Meetings](#) and regular check-ins with tenants in their homes and neighbourhoods.

Promoting Positive Relationships

Our Tenant and Community Engagement Strategy, [Building Bridges](#) sets out how we engage our tenants and support people to get involved. It outlines how tenants can have a say in how we deliver our services and participate in social activities in their neighbourhoods and communities. Some of the ways tenants can get involved include joining a local Tenant Advisory Group meeting, attending a Time To Talk session, starting a community garden or applying for a [Big Idea Grant](#).

Action When Disputes Arise

We encourage tenants and neighbours to try to resolve any issues through discussion between themselves in the first instance.

Often disputes between neighbours can be resolved independently without our intervention. Other times, where issues cannot be resolved through discussion, we will manage neighbourhood disputes using a three-step process:

1. Listen – we will listen to your story, record the details, and confirm whether there will be any further action. If we proceed, we will provide your neighbour with the opportunity to respond and write to you to confirm this action.
2. Manage – we will review evidence to determine if there has been a breach of tenancy. We will refer, mediate and act to ensure breaches of tenancy are addressed and wherever possible conflict is managed.

3. Advise – we will let you know the outcome of our investigation in writing and our actions. We aim to complete the investigation within 21 days.

Managing complaints when they are a breach of tenancy

Where there is evidence that a complaint is a breach of the Residential Tenancy Agreement, we will take action based on the type and seriousness of the breach. This can range from written warnings to taking action to terminate a tenancy.

Evidence

To take action, we must have evidence to support the complaint. Evidence needs to be factual and verified by independent sources.

Evidence may include a diary of events, witness statements, police reports, and/or statements or diaries from other neighbours. We encourage the tenant making the complaint to keep a diary detailing any disturbances or incidents. The diary needs to be factual, objective and state dates, times, and incidents.

Caution must be exercised if choosing to use photographs, recordings, or video footage as evidence. It is important to do so in a way that respects privacy and does not in itself cause harassment, intimidation or increase hostility. An individual must be advised that they are being filmed or having an audio recording made by informing the person that this will occur.

We do not permit the installation of cameras or recording equipment in common areas on our properties.

Minor Breaches

In line with the principles of natural justice, for instances of minor breaches including noise, rubbish dumping or use of common areas, tenants will be given the opportunity to change and address their behaviour.

The tenant or household occupant will be reminded in writing of their rights and responsibilities under the NSW Residential Tenancies Act, the nature of the complaint made against them, the evidence of the complaint made against them and action that may be taken if complaints continue. We will actively refer neighbours to the [Community Justice Centre](#) to mediate their dispute.

Serious Breaches

If a tenant's behaviour seriously or persistently breaches their Residential Tenancy Agreement, we will take action through the [NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal](#). This includes instances of proven violence, assault, or other criminal activity.

Our action can range from seeking a Specific Performance Order to cease an action which is a breach of tenancy to terminating a tenancy.

The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal may decline a request for a termination of tenancy, or a specific performance order based on the evidence provided or their interpretation of tenancy law.

Illegal Activity

We will investigate all alleged breaches of the Residential Tenancy Agreement but cannot investigate criminal matters, such as alleged drug dealing, assault, harassment, or theft. These matters must be referred by tenants to the NSW Police.

We can seek confirmation of any illegal activity or complaints made by tenants to the NSW Police through an application under the NSW Record of Understanding. This information can be submitted as evidence at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, and may result in action being taken against the tenancy in question.

Banning Notices

On the advice of NSW Police, we may issue a Banning Notice under the [NSW Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901](#). A Banning Notice limits the right of a person to access a Bridge Housing property. Banning Notices can be issued to tenants or their visitors. If a person is issued with a Banning Notice and they then return to the property, they can be removed by Police and/or by issued with a fine. Banning Notices will be used for individuals who are proven to be causing an ongoing nuisance or disturbance that impacts the peaceful enjoyment of our tenants.

Complaints about Service Delivery

If a tenant is not satisfied with the way that we have managed neighbour complaints, they can ask for a formal review. Further information on this process can be found our [Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy](#). This policy, and an information leaflet, is available from Bridge Housing's office or can be downloaded from our website www.bridgehousing.org.au.

Related Documents and Resources

Type	Title
Legislation	Residential Tenancies Act 2010
Legislation	Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 (NSW)
Policy	Block Meetings
Policy	Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy
Resource	Building Bridges
Resource	Big Idea Grant
Resource	Community Justice Centre

English

If you need help to understand this letter please contact the Telephone Interpreters Service on 131450 and ask them to contact on 8324 0800 for you at no cost. You can also come to the Bridge Housing office and ask for assistance in your language.

Simplified Chinese

如果您理解这封信有困难，请拨打电话传译服务 131450 要求电话传译 服务替您拨打 Bridge Housing，电话 8324 0800。这项服务是免费的。您也可以到 Bridge Housing 的办公室来。要求用您的语言来协助您。

Spanish

Si necesita ayuda para entender esta carta, por favor comuníquese con el Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes al 131450 y solicite que lo contacten sin cargo con Bridge Housing al 8324 0800. También puede dirigirse a las oficinas de Bridge Housing y solicitar asistencia en su idioma.

Russian

Если для понимания содержания этого письма Вам необходима помощь, свяжитесь, пожалуйста, с Телефонной переводческой службой по номеру 131450 и попросите соединить Вас с Bridge Housing по номеру 8324 0800. За соединение платить не нужно. Кроме того, Вы можете лично посетить офис Bridge Housing и попросить об услугах переводчика.

Greek

Εάν χρειάζεστε βοήθεια για να κατανοήσετε την παρούσα επιστολή, παρακαλώ επικοινωνήστε με την Υπηρεσία Τηλεφωνικών Διερμηνέων στο 131450 και ζητήστε τους να επικοινωνήσουν με το 8324 0800 για εσάς χωρίς καμία χρέωση. Μπορείτε επίσης να επισκεφθείτε το γραφείο Bridge Housing και να ζητήσετε βοήθεια στη γλώσσα σας.

Vietnamese

Nếu cần người giúp để hiểu thư này xin quý vị liên hệ với Dịch Vụ Thông Ngôn Điện Thoại số 131450 và nhờ họ liên lạc với Bridge Housing qua số 8324 0800 cho quý vị một cách miễn phí. Quý vị cũng có thể đến Văn Phòng của Bridge Housing và xin giúp đỡ bằng ngôn-ngữ của quý-vị.

Arabic

إذا احتجت إلى مُساعدة في فهم هذه الرسالة رجاء الاتصال مع خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية على رقم 131450 واطلُب منهم أن يتصلوا لك بمكّتب على رقم 8324 0800 بدون تكلفة عليك. ويُمكّنك أيضا الحضور إلى مكّتب Bridge Housing وطلب المساعدة بلُغتك.