

BELGRAVE NEIGHBOURHOOD CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION RESIDENT DISPUTES POLICY

Aims of the resident disputes policy

The following are aims of the resident disputes policy:

- To ensure that harmony and peace is promoted between co-op members and residents
- To ensure that informal methods are available to resolve resident disputes where appropriate
- To ensure that members can also raise resident dispute issues formally
- To ensure that resident disputes issues will be dealt with effectively and fairly

Delegated Authority

- 1 The co-op's Management Committee has delegated management of the resident dispute policy to its Senior Housing Lead who is authorised to:
 - respond to complainants
 - initiate actions as set out in this resident dispute policy
- 2 The Senior Housing Lead will bring all residents dispute to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer, and will agree with them actions to take in relation to complaints.
- 3 Resident dispute cases that require significant actions to be taken will usually require Management Committee approval. Urgent action should usually be approved by the Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Housing Lead.

Resident disputes

- 4 Resident disputes can occur in co-ops and because of the close community connections inherent to co-ops, can be difficult to deal with.
- 5 A resident dispute is defined as when a member/resident makes a complaint about the behaviour of another member/resident or their

guests. Resident disputes can also be characterised by the resident complained about also raising complaints about the complainant. Some of the issues raised may be considered under the Anti-social Behaviour Policy. Some issues raised may be breaches of tenancy and may need to be handled in accordance with Tenancy Breach Policy.

- 6 The co-op will keep full records (in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations) of all communications, actions and letters relating to resident disputes, including where agreements are made verbally.
- 7 The co-op will ensure that it considers its equality and diversity policy in relation to ensuring that all parties to any dispute are provided appropriate support if they have need of it.

Informal approach

- 8 Unless there is clear evidence of a serious tenancy breach, the co-op may initially propose that a resident dispute be resolved informally between the parties concerned.
- 9 Where it may assist in resolving a resident dispute informally, the co-op may identify someone who is not party to the dispute to act impartially to assist in resolutions.
- 10 Sending letters to all parties clarifying behaviour expected of residents may be an appropriate response to resident disputes involving minor tenancy issues.

Formal resident dispute handling

- 11 Formal resident disputes need to be investigated and considered non-judgementally. This will include interviews with the initial complainant, other parties to the dispute and anyone else who has relevant information about it.
- 12 Where the dispute involves tenancy breaches, the co-op may take action in accordance with the Tenancy Breach Policy. Where the dispute does not involve a breach, or where the dispute needs resolution as well as dealing with the breach, resolution of the dispute

through mediation may be offered. Resolution of a resident dispute may include asking parties to a dispute to sign up to an agreement between them about acceptable behaviour.

- 13 Where appropriate, consideration may be given to how the co-op checks that any commitments signed up to are being complied with.

Potential risks to be avoided

- A resident dispute escalates and starts to affect many people and activities in the co-op
- Not ensuring sufficient objectivity in the management or investigation of a resident dispute by asking someone too close to the dispute to manage it