Sentinel Lettings

Tenant Conduct and Safety Policy

Agency Details

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1	N/A	N/A	First Edition	
2	27/05/26	5	Branding and Dresscode	Dress and behaviour in communal areas

SENTINEL
LETTINGS

Tenant Conduct & Safety Policy

Applies to: all tenants, permitted occupiers, and guests in any property managed by the Agency (HMOs and single lets).

Purpose: to ensure a safe, respectful home; to explain "tenant-like manner"; to prevent harassment or abuse (including sexual harassment and any sexual offences); and to set out reporting, support and agency limits.

1) Legal and tenancy basis (what this policy sits on)

Your signed tenancy agreement already requires you to:

- **Behave in a tenant-like manner** and take reasonable care of the property and common parts (e.g., cleanliness, ventilation/heating to avoid mould, avoiding blockages, reporting repairs promptly).
- **Not harass or act in an antisocial way** toward anyone in or near the property (residents, visitors, the landlord/agent/contractors, neighbours). This includes threats, assault, nuisance, excessive noise, hate incidents and use of the property for illegal/immoral purposes.
- **Co-operate with HMO management or licence duties** and reasonable instructions if you live in an HMO (e.g., keep escapes clear, share information needed for compliance).
- This policy explains how we apply those clauses day-to-day and links to our internal procedures.

2) What "tenant-like manner" means in practice

Acting "tenant-like" means you will:

- **Care for the home:** keep your room and shared areas reasonably clean and tidy; use heating and ventilation sensibly to reduce condensation whilst minimising energy waste; avoid blocking sinks or toilets and follow any guidance we provide; report defects promptly; and take reasonable steps to prevent damage or loss.

- **Respect people and property:** be considerate to housemates, neighbours and contractors; follow fire-safety rules; keep exits clear; allow access for inspection and repairs with reasonable notice; don't alter or remove fixtures without consent.
- **Follow house rules & policies:** e.g., no illegal drug use (see Drug Use & Illicit Substances Policy), overnight visitor rules, Managed Property Fire Safety Policy, Code of Conduct, Tenant Check-In Agreement and communications protocols (CoHo).

3) Respectful conduct: zero tolerance of harassment, abuse or intimidation

You must not harass, threaten, abuse, stalk, or intimidate anyone in the property or neighbourhood for any reason (including because of someone's race, sex, sexuality, disability, age, religion or belief, nationality or other status). This includes verbal abuse, unwanted contact or surveillance, unwanted touching (assault), threats, offensive messages, posts, and nuisance behaviour.

These obligations are already in your tenancy (anti-social behaviour clause) and breach may lead to tenancy enforcement and/or police involvement .

4) Sexual conduct and consent

In Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), unrelated occupiers share kitchens, bathrooms and other common parts, so privacy, consent and respectful boundaries are critical.

HMOs are expressly defined as shared living between unrelated people, with local standards recognising the need for clear rules on sleeping arrangements and use of communal areas. Any sexualised behaviour, intimate activity or sexual advances in **communal spaces** is prohibited; unwanted comments, messages or physical contact will be treated as harassment and anti-social conduct under your tenancy.

Never enter another resident's room without explicit permission, and keep bathrooms and other shared spaces respectful and safe for everyone. **An open door is not an invitation to enter a room.** Our management duties in HMOs include protecting occupiers and keeping common parts safe, and we may take proportionate steps (e.g., warnings, tenancy enforcement or referral to authorities) where behaviour places others at risk or undermines safety in shared areas .

- **Consent:** Sexual activity requires clear, ongoing, and freely-given agreement. Sexual conduct without consent (or where a person is overly intoxicated, asleep, coerced, very vulnerable or otherwise unable to consent) is unlawful.
- **Inappropriate sexual conduct** includes sexual harassment (e.g., sexual comments, propositions, unwanted touching, indecent exposure), sending explicit images without consent, sharing intimate images, and any sexual activity in communal areas.
- **This policy prohibits** any sexual conduct that is non-consensual, abusive, harassing, or that creates a hostile living environment. Allegations may trigger safeguarding steps, police referral (where appropriate) and tenancy action consistent with your AST and our policies.

5) Dress and behaviour in communal areas

Tenants are entitled to quiet enjoyment of their home and to make reasonable, lawful use of shared spaces. This includes any communal gardens, kitchens, lounges, hallways, landings, staircases, bathrooms, utility areas and any other shared parts of the property.

The Agency's role is to manage tenancy obligations, safety, nuisance, harassment, anti-social behaviour, property standards and legal compliance. We will assess concerns objectively and proportionately. We will not restrict lawful, non-harassing behaviour solely because another occupier personally dislikes it, disapproves of it, or finds it inconsistent with their personal, cultural, religious or moral views.

However, all tenants must use communal areas in a way that is respectful, hygienic, non-sexual, non-intimidating and appropriate for shared living.

5.1 External communal spaces, gardens and sunbathing

Sunbathing, sitting outside, exercising, reading, eating or socialising in a communal garden is generally acceptable where it is done lawfully and respectfully.

Acceptable behaviour includes:

- sunbathing in ordinary clothing, sportswear or appropriate swimwear;
- using the garden quietly and reasonably during normal hours;
- applying sun cream, lying on a towel or sitting on garden furniture;
- wearing clothing that another tenant personally dislikes, provided it is not indecent, threatening, targeted, sexualised or harassing;

- breastfeeding, medical needs, disability-related adjustments, or clothing choices linked to comfort, identity or lawful personal expression.

For the purpose of this policy, “indecent” does not mean clothing that is simply revealing, unusual, culturally different, disliked, or considered immodest by another tenant. “Indecent” means nudity, deliberate exposure of intimate areas, sexualised exposure, or clothing and behaviour that is objectively lewd, obscene, sexually explicit, threatening, harassing, or intended to shock, alarm, distress or intimidate others in a shared living environment.

The following are examples that are not acceptable and in many instances will not only be a breach of tenancy agreement, but may also be classed as a criminal offence:

- deliberate nudity or deliberate exposure of genitals, buttocks or intimate areas in view of others;
- sexual activity, masturbation, sexualised posing or sexual advances in communal areas;
- deliberately positioning oneself to shock, intimidate, provoke or distress another person;
- making sexual comments, gestures or remarks about another tenant’s body or clothing;
- photographing, filming or sharing images of another tenant without consent;
- repeatedly using the garden in a way that blocks access, prevents others from reasonable use, or creates nuisance;
- aggressive, threatening, abusive or discriminatory comments about another tenant’s clothing, body, religion, culture, gender, sexuality or personal choices.

A complaint that a tenant is “offended” by lawful sunbathing, without more, will not normally be treated as a tenancy breach. The Agency may remind all tenants of respectful shared-space use, but we will not require a tenant to stop lawful sunbathing merely because another tenant objects.

5.2 Internal communal spaces

Internal communal areas are different from gardens because tenants must pass through and use them for daily living, cooking, washing, safety and access. A higher standard of dress and behaviour is expected inside the property.

Tenants must wear appropriate clothing in internal communal areas. As a minimum, tenants should be suitably covered when using or passing through kitchens, lounges, hallways, landings, stairs, utility rooms and other shared indoor spaces. Tenants should not be naked, in underwear only, or deliberately exposed in these areas.

Appropriate indoor dress includes ordinary clothing, nightwear, a dressing gown, robe, towel wrap or other covering when briefly travelling to or from a bathroom or bedroom. Tenants should be particularly mindful that kitchens and lounges are shared living areas, not private bedrooms or bathrooms.

Bathrooms and toilets are private-use spaces while occupied. Tenants may undress, shower, bathe or change in the bathroom with the door closed or locked. Tenants must not leave bathroom or bedroom doors open while naked or exposed where this may be seen by others in communal areas.

The following is acceptable:

- briefly walking from bedroom to bathroom in a dressing gown, towel wrap or suitable covering;
- wearing pyjamas, lounge wear or casual clothing in shared areas;
- dressing differently because of culture, religion, disability, gender identity, pregnancy, breastfeeding, medical needs or comfort;
- accidental or brief exposure where it is genuinely unintentional and not repeated.

The following is not acceptable:

- walking, standing, sitting or cooking naked in internal communal areas;
- repeatedly using kitchens, lounges, hallways or stairs in underwear only;
- leaving bedroom or bathroom doors open while naked or partly exposed;
- sexual activity or intimate behaviour in kitchens, lounges, hallways, bathrooms, gardens or other communal areas;
- deliberately exposing oneself to another tenant, guest, contractor or Agency staff member;
- making sexual comments, gestures, propositions or jokes directed at another person;
- filming, photographing or watching another tenant in a state of undress;
- using clothing, nudity or behaviour to intimidate, harass, provoke or target another person;

- refusing reasonable requests to maintain privacy and decency in shared indoor spaces.

5.3 Balance between personal freedom and shared living

Tenants are not required to dress according to another tenant's personal moral standard. However, shared living requires basic boundaries.

The Agency will look at the facts objectively, including:

- where the behaviour happened;
- whether the space was internal or external;
- whether the behaviour was accidental, brief, repeated or deliberate;
- whether intimate areas were exposed;
- whether the conduct was sexualised, threatening, targeted or harassing;
- whether other tenants were prevented from reasonable use of the communal space;
- whether there is evidence, witnesses, messages, images or repeated reports.

Mere offence, embarrassment or moral disagreement is not anti-social behaviour. However, repeated targeted behaviour, deliberate provocation, harassment, indecency, intimidation or conduct affecting other tenants' reasonable use of the property may be treated as anti-social behaviour and escalated under this policy.

The Agency may take no action, issue a general house reminder, speak to the tenant privately, issue a formal warning, inform the landlord, restrict use of communal areas where lawful and proportionate, report the matter to the relevant authority, or consider tenancy enforcement where there is evidence of breach.

5.4 When it may become a police matter

Some behaviour should be reported to the Police rather than treated only as a house-rule issue. This may include:

- deliberate exposure intended to cause alarm, distress or sexual gratification;
- sexual activity or lewd behaviour in communal spaces where others can see it;
- outraging public decency, where behaviour is lewd, obscene or disgusting and capable of being seen by two or more people;

- sexual assault, unwanted touching, stalking, voyeurism or filming without consent;
- threats, intimidation, violence, hate incidents or harassment;
- behaviour involving children, vulnerable adults or safeguarding concerns.

In an emergency or immediate danger, tenants should call **999**. For non-emergency police reports, tenants should call **101** or use online police reporting where available.

Police guidance describes outraging public decency as lewd, obscene or disgusting behaviour in the presence of at least two members of the public, and explains that indecent exposure and outraging public decency can be reported to the police.

The government also describes anti-social behaviour as behaviour that causes harassment, alarm or distress, with police, councils and landlords working together locally to deal with it.

5.5 When it may be reported to the local authority

The Agency will usually try to manage tenant conduct issues through communication, reminders, warnings, landlord notification, inspection evidence and tenancy enforcement. However, some behaviour may need to be reported to the local authority, particularly where it affects the wider property, neighbours, licensing compliance, public safety or the local community.

The Agency may report anti-social behaviour to the local authority, environmental health, private rented sector enforcement team, HMO licensing team, community safety team or safeguarding team where appropriate.

This may include:

- persistent noise nuisance, shouting, parties or disturbance affecting neighbours or other occupiers;
- repeated aggressive, threatening, abusive or intimidating behaviour;
- harassment, hate incidents or discriminatory behaviour affecting occupiers, neighbours, contractors or staff;
- drug use, drug dealing, cuckooing concerns or repeated suspicious visitors;
- repeated unauthorised guests or occupation that may breach HMO or selective licence conditions;
- behaviour causing fear, alarm, distress or significant disruption to other tenants or neighbours;

- waste, fly-tipping, vermin-attracting behaviour, blocked access routes or unsafe use of communal areas;
- fire safety breaches, tampering with alarms, blocking escape routes or unsafe storage;
- safeguarding concerns involving children, vulnerable adults, exploitation, coercion or domestic abuse;
- ASB occurring outside the property, in the street, garden, driveway, neighbouring land or local area;
- repeated incidents that are beyond the Agency's reasonable ability to control through tenancy management alone.

A one-off disagreement, personality clash, lawful sunbathing, ordinary use of communal space, or behaviour that is merely disliked or considered personally offensive will not normally be reported to the local authority unless there is an objective risk, repeated nuisance, harassment, discrimination, safeguarding concern, licence breach or wider community impact.

Where a matter appears to involve criminal behaviour, immediate danger, violence, sexual offending, threats, hate crime, drugs or serious harassment, the Police may be the more appropriate first report. Where both tenancy management and public authority involvement are appropriate, the Agency may report to both the local authority and the Police, and will cooperate with lawful requests for information.

The Agency will record the concern, evidence considered, action taken, and reasons for any referral. Information will only be shared where lawful, necessary and proportionate, including to protect safety, comply with HMO or licensing duties, support safeguarding, assist enforcement, or meet legal obligations.

Nothing in this policy prevents a tenant from reporting concerns directly to the Police of Local Authority.

6) Drugs, alcohol, and overnight visitors (how these intersect with safety)

- **Illegal drugs**: zero-tolerance applies. We may warn, report to police or local authority and/or pursue tenancy enforcement where there's evidence or reasonable suspicion of breach (see TNM Drug Use & Illicit Substances Policy).
- **Overnight visitors (HMOs/selective areas):** overnight guests are generally **not permitted** without written permission due to licensing and safeguarding; breaches

may lead to immediate action to remove unauthorised guests and enforcement (see Overnight Visitors Policy) .
- **Alcohol:** do not use alcohol to excuse harassment or unsafe conduct. Being intoxicated is **not** a defence to misconduct.

7) Conduct Towards Agency Staff and Contractors

All tenants and their visitors must treat Agency staff and contractors with respect and courtesy at all times. This includes allowing inspections, safety checks, and maintenance works to proceed in a safe and professional environment.

- **Appropriate conduct during inspections:** Tenants must be fully dressed and out of bed when inspections or maintenance visits take place. Remaining in bed, being partially clothed, or being naked while Agency staff (particularly female staff or lone workers) are present is unacceptable and will result in the inspection being terminated immediately.
- **Staff autonomy:** Agency staff and contractors have absolute discretion to refuse entry, stop an inspection, or leave the property if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or that professional boundaries are not being respected. They are not required to continue an inspection, check-in or check-out in such circumstances.
- **Safeguarding and protection:** This protects staff and contractors (who may otherwise feel vulnerable or at risk) and tenants (from potential misunderstandings or allegations). Inspections may be rescheduled, but persistent inappropriate conduct will be treated as a **serious breach of tenancy** and may lead to formal warnings or tenancy enforcement.
- **Escalation:** If a tenant acts aggressively, intimidates staff, or exposes themselves, the Agency reserves the right to withdraw services, charge for aborted visits, report to the landlord and, where appropriate, involve the police.

8) If something happens — reporting & support

Emergencies: If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call **999** (police/ambulance/fire).

Non-emergency police: call **101** (e.g., to report harassment or a crime that is not happening now).

Health: call **NHS 111** for urgent medical advice.

Sexual assault or rape: you can report to the police, or you may contact a local Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) to discuss options and forensic support (you can attend a SARC without reporting to police).

Specialist support (examples): Rape Crisis (England & Wales), SurvivorsUK (for men and boys), Galop (LGBT+), Refuge – National Domestic Abuse Helpline, and Victim Support. Search online for the most up-to-date contact details in your area.

Agency contact: report concerns to us through **CoHo** or by email (see your check-in pack). We will take reports seriously, record them, and explain options (see also our Complaints Procedure for redress options if you are unhappy with our handling) .

Evidence & confidentiality: If you are considering police or SARC support, they can advise on preserving evidence. We keep reports private and only share information where required to protect life, safety, fulfil safeguarding and legal duties, or if you ask us to share details.

9) What the Agency will do (and the limits of our role)

When you disclose harassment or abuse (including sexual misconduct) to us, we will:

- **Listen and acknowledge** your report without judgment;
- **Explain options** (police, SARC, support agencies, tenancy management steps);
- **Record** what you tell us (time/date, what happened, who was present) and store it securely;
- **Take proportionate steps** to help manage risk in the property;
- **Escalate** if there's an **immediate threat** or a **safeguarding concern** (children or vulnerable adults)—we may contact police or the local authority even if a victim does not wish to, to protect others at risk.
- **We do not** investigate like the police, provide legal or medical advice, or act as counsellors. We are a property management company and our role is limited to tenancy management and signposting to professionals where appropriate.

10) Tenancy enforcement (what may happen after a breach)

- Misconduct can result in warnings, enhanced inspections, and, where justified, legal action seeking possession based on nuisance or annoyance and related grounds under the Housing Act 1988 (your AST highlights that grounds for possession include causing a nuisance or annoyance) .

- Drug-related and unauthorised-guest breaches are managed under our published policies and may be reported to authorities or licensing teams as appropriate .

11) Practical house rules (summary)

- Treat fellow residents, neighbours, agency staff and contractors with courtesy and respect. Abusive or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated (your check-in pack makes this explicit) .
- Keep noise to a reasonable level; keep exits and walkways clear; follow fire-safety guidance.
- No illegal drug use or dealing on the premises.
- Follow visitor rules.
- Use **CoHo** for non-emergency communications and to report maintenance issues promptly (as set out at check-in) .

12) How to raise concerns or complain about our handling

If you are unhappy with our handling of any conduct/safety issue, please use our **Complaints Procedure**. We will acknowledge, investigate and respond in line with published timescales, and you have access to the **Property Redress Scheme** if unresolved .