

Unreasonable Behaviour Policy



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1 Purpose and background

- 1.1 We expect those working for us to treat customers (residents and others using our services) with respect and professionalism. We also expect that customers will treat those working for us with respect and reasonableness, as they do their job. Even when telling us something is wrong, most people show respect, reasonableness, and cooperate with us while we resolve the issue.
- 1.2 Occasionally, the actions or behaviour of an individual makes it very hard for us to deliver our services. In a small number of cases the behaviour or actions become completely unacceptable, either by putting an unreasonable demand on our services, or intimidating and abusing our staff.
- 1.3 Our staff have a right to do their jobs without fear of being intimidated, threatened, abused, or harassed. As a responsible employer, we will take action to protect them. We have zero tolerance of violence towards our staff, and you will face serious action as a consequence.
- 1.4 Some behaviour has an impact on our ability to carry out our work or provide services to other residents. We will not accept actions that result in unacceptable or excessive demands on our service, or that prevent us from carrying out our duties effectively. We may also record that an incident occurred.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all customers or residents of L&Q and its subsidiaries. It applies to applicants, visitors, and anyone that our staff, or those working in our behalf, may come into contact with, as part of their role.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all areas of our work and to all methods of contact including telephone calls, in-person visits and meetings, letters, e-mails, social media and other digital channels.

3 What is unreasonable behaviour?

- 3.1 For the context of this policy, we provide information below about the types of behaviour and actions that we view as unreasonable or unacceptable. It is not intended to be exhaustive, but gives an indication of the types of conduct which will lead us to take some form of action.

Aggressive or Violent Behaviour

- 3.2 While someone may be upset with a situation or the service they have received, it is never acceptable to shout or swear at staff or threaten them. We realise people can

act out of character when distressed, frustrated, or due to ill-health, and we try to consider this. But it is no excuse for taking this out on our staff.

- 3.3 We consider it to be unacceptable, where frustration about a situation or service leads a person to become aggressive towards our staff. Violence and aggression includes behaviour or language that can cause staff to feel afraid, threatened, or abused. It can include physical harm but also verbal or written threats, including targeting an individual. We have zero tolerance of violence directed towards any of our staff.

Harassment and threats

- 3.4 Our staff, and others working on our behalf, have the right to carry out their duties free from harassment or threats of harassment. We ask you to understand that staff are delivering services and communicating decisions on behalf of L&Q.
- 3.5 Threats against staff will be taken very seriously. Even where there has been no overt aggression, if staff feel scared or threatened at any point during a conversation with a customer, our instruction is that they may end the interaction. This may mean immediately leaving a property or ending a call.
- 3.6 We will support our staff in taking action for criminal behaviour aimed against them, such as stalking. Such behaviour is completely unacceptable.
- 3.7 Examples of behaviours we consider to be harassment of our staff include, but are not limited to:
- Making threats of violence – including through other people
 - Making threats against them or their family, threats to ruin their career etc
 - Waiting for staff outside of our offices, spying on them, or following them to their vehicle or home – all of which we consider to be stalking
 - Cyberstalking a member of staff, through the use of social media platforms or apps, and contact using their personal details or personal social media presence
 - Publishing personal, sensitive or private information about staff - online or otherwise, and malicious communications
 - Recording telephone discussions and publishing the information on social media
 - Taking photographs or videoing staff without their consent
 - Abusive phone calls or constant calling/dropped calls to an individual or team
 - Sexualised behaviour or language directed towards our staff
 - Preventing staff from leaving a space freely

Unacceptable language

- 3.8 We view unacceptable language to be that which:
- is offensive, rude or inflammatory
 - is discriminatory in any way, including racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic comments. (This may also constitute a hate crime).
 - makes serious allegations that individuals have committed criminal, corrupt or perverse conduct - without evidence to support this.
 - is aggressive and full of expletives
- 3.9 Even where comments are not targeted at us, but are about a third party, we will let you know if we find this unacceptable. Examples include discriminatory comments, offensive remarks, or raising unsubstantiated allegations towards third parties.
- 3.10 Our staff are instructed to terminate a conversation where someone is using unacceptable language, despite being asked to stop.

Unreasonable demands or levels of contact

- 3.11 We may consider it to be unreasonable if meeting a person's demands, or responding to repeated levels of contact, will substantially affect the capacity of our staff to carry out their role or to deliver a service to others.
- 3.12 Examples of such unreasonable behaviour may include, but isn't limited to:
- Insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff. We will let you know if someone else is able to deal with the matter instead.
 - Repeatedly demanding responses, actions or appointments within unreasonable timescales, or demanding that we do something that we aren't responsible to do.
 - Repeatedly changing the substance of a complaint or raising unrelated concerns. (We will let you know if it is more appropriate to raise another complaint. See our Complaints policy).
 - Refusing to leave a building/area when asked.
 - Preventing us from carrying out a necessary task, or preventing us from having access to carry out a necessary function
- 3.13 Sometimes the amount or length of contacts made by an individual can become an issue. This may occur:
- Over a short period - for example large numbers of calls in a single day

- Over a longer period where, for example, large amounts of information are sent or requested, that isn't relevant or which has already been considered.
- The same information is sent to multiple people or through multiple channels requesting additional responses (We may coordinate a single response in such a situation).
- Using a third party to contact us again about a matter where we have already given a response and a process (such as the complaints process) has already been exhausted.

3.14 We may consider that the level of contact has become unacceptable when the amount of time spent responding to a customer is disproportionate to the situation, and impedes our normal delivery of the service. For example, where this will take an excessive amount of staff time, to the extent where it limits our ability to provide a service to others.

4 What action will we take?

4.1 The action we take will depend on the severity, or frequency of the nature of the behaviour, or its impact. Sometimes we can take simple and immediate action by reminding someone that their speech or behaviour is not acceptable, and where this is accepted it may resolve the matter. We may still need to record that the incident occurred.

4.2 When we experience more serious behaviour or frequent demands which are unacceptable, we may consider taking more formal action. The actions we will consider can include, but aren't limited to the following:

- A written warning to the customer about their behaviour
- Appointing a specific point/method of contact for the resident, or restricting or limiting contact with particular staff members or departments
- Restrict communication with a resident – this would be kept under review. We may also agree to communicate through a third party representative
- Deciding not to investigate a complaint any further. (The Complaints policy includes the option for a complainant to escalate to the Housing Ombudsman at any point).
- Report criminal incidents to the police
- Take legal action for a breach of tenancy or lease, or an injunction to prevent access to a location or person

- 4.3 We will provide support for staff as part of the action we take. We will train managers and staff to recognise signs of unreasonable behaviour, and to support colleagues who may be affected by it. We will communicate this policy to staff, including guidance on implementing it as and where needed.

5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 5.1 We conducted an Equality Impact Assessment as part of the development of this policy. We acknowledged that some medical conditions may affect a persons behaviour. This could for example include dementia, autism, learning difficulties, or poor mental health
- 5.2 While we can take this into account, and may be able to consider whether we can make a service adjustment as needed, a key message is that we take seriously our duty as an employer to protect the safety and well-being of our staff.

6 Policy controls sheet

Date of approval: 03/03/2026

Approved by: Customer Group – following January 2026 meeting and circulation

Effective date: 03/03/2026

Next Review date: 31/03/2027

Policy owned by: Executive Group Director – Customer Service

Associated documents: Unreasonable Behaviour policy

Main change	Key points
New policy supporting and enhancing existing procedures including Unreasonable Behaviour Standard Operating Procedure	
Reviewed by: Policy team	
Approved by: Customer Group following internal consultation, including Employee Safety Committee	