



Estate Management Policy

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1. Introduction

ng homes recognise that Estate Management is a vital part of the Housing Associations Role as Landlord and an important service for tenants, owners and sharing owners.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims of the Associations Estate Management Policy is to ensure that:

- tenants, sharing owners and owners live in well managed and maintained housing providing a decent, secure, safe, clean and tidy environment.
- Ensure that tenants sharing owners and owners are made aware of, and accept, their responsibilities in relation to the upkeep of their property and surrounding environment.
- Ensure that tenants, sharing owners and owners are made aware of ng homes responsibilities in relation to Estate Management.
- Tenants, sharing owners and owners are satisfied with the Estate Management service provided by the Association.
- We provide opportunities for tenants, sharing owners and owners to feedback in order to influence and participate in decision making relating to estate management.
- The upkeep of the housing stock and surrounding environment are managed and maintained to a standard which reduces the duration and level of void properties.

To achieve the above objectives the Association will:

- Work closely with tenants, sharing owners, focus groups and estate representatives regarding the quality of estate management services provided
- Closely monitor the performance of contractors and the Estate Service regarding the upkeep of all common areas,
- Carry out regular surveys on the quality of all estate management services.
- Involve tenants, sharing owners and owners in developing initiatives for the improvement of their local environment and amenities.
- Keep tenants, sharing owners and owners informed about activities affecting their community.

- Provide good quality information and advice on estate management services, including at the tenancy sign up stage, new tenant visits, focus groups, information leaflets, newsletter articles.
- Carry out regular inspections of our housing areas.
- Make the most effective use of internal recording systems including Housing Officer Handheld devices and standard forms.
- Ensure staff maintain a visible presence throughout the Associations housing areas and in Housing Officer patches.
- Be proactive and take appropriate and early action to enforce tenancy conditions where applicable.
- Work closely with other agencies and statutory bodies with the aim of ensuring that the organisations housing areas and surrounding environment are well looked after.
- Ensure good relationships are developed with tenants, sharing owners and owners to encourage interest and involvement within their area for the mutual benefit of both the Association and the local community.
- Encourage feedback on services and publish findings from surveys and visits.

3. The Legal and Regulatory framework

The main legislative provision relating to the policy is the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

This policy has taken into account the requirements set out in social housing charter that became effective on 1 April 2012.

Outcome 6: Estate Management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes

Social landlords ensure that:

- tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services that the landlord provides.

Outcome 13: Value for Money

Social landlords manage all aspect of their business so that: tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charge that they pay.

The ng homes Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement is the contractual relationship between the Housing Association and our tenants.

- The Tenancy Agreement explains tenants' estate management obligations. This includes the keeping of pets, garden maintenance and the removal of rubbish.
- The ng homes obligation of membership also highlights tenants' responsibilities in terms of environmental matters.

4. Estate Management Service Standards

Garden Maintenance

The Tenancy Agreement outlines tenants have to take responsibility for ensuring their garden is clean, tidy and not causing a nuisance.

Gardens are inspected on a regular basis. Staff carry out regular estate management walkabouts of the area. If gardens are not maintained to a satisfactory standard, ng homes will take the necessary action to address the issue.

Discretion can be exercised in terms of the number of warnings and corrective action when dealing with untidy gardens. Consideration should be given to the level of growth, condition and actual ability within household to respond quickly.

Generally, when an untidy garden is identified contact is made with the tenant. This can be in any form – phone, letter or card through the door.

Common Areas

- **Stair Cleaning**

ng homes will clean all tenemental stairs (we own or factor) on a weekly basis weather permitting. It is also expected that tenants should take appropriate care of the maintenance of the stairs. The intention of the stair cleaning service is to enhance the actions of tenants in maintaining the common parts to an acceptable standard

- **Common Ground**

ng homes will regularly cut common areas removing all grass, cut communal hedges and remove cuttings and maintain all shrub beds.

- **Vandalism**

Damage to, or the defacing of, Association property due to wilful acts of graffiti, Vandalism, neglect or abuse will be thoroughly investigated and attempts made to identify the perpetrator(s) who will be reported to the Police, and consideration given to the practicalities of seeking recovery of the costs of reinstatement having regard to the costs of legal action and the likelihood of success. Where an identified perpetrator is a tenant, or a member of the tenant's household, the tenant shall be interviewed by the Housing Manager and issued with a warning as to his or her, or household member's future conduct, and that they, the tenants, will be held liable for repayment of the reinstatement costs. Repeated offences will be deemed a breach of the tenancy conditions and acted upon accordingly.

- **Maintenance of footpaths, garden paths.**

ng homes will inspect on a regular basis and take appropriate action when necessary.

- **Play park and facilities**

ng homes will maintain the play park that they are responsible for on a regular basis and carry out repairs when required.

- **Noise**

Reports of excessive noise will be investigated and where substantiated action taken as appropriate in accordance with the Association's Anti Social Behaviour Policy.

- **Pets/ Dog Fouling**

Approval to keep pets will be subject to the condition that tenants keep their pets under proper control at all times and:

- Do not allow it to cause a nuisance or annoyance to other residents; or to foul in the gardens of other tenants/residents, or in common landscaped areas.
- Failure to comply with the approval conditions will result in the withdrawal of permission to keep the animal (in the case of a private owner a formal

Complaint of a public nuisance will be made to the police)

- **Bulk Uplift/Refuse Collection**

The Association will liaise with Glasgow City Council Cleansing Services on any issues in relation to bulk uplift/refuse collection of adopted areas with Association developments for which the Council is responsible.

The Association will ensure that guidance is given to residents concerning rubbish disposal - including garden waste, bulk items and ordinary household waste.

5. Multi-Agency Working

ng homes recognises the need to develop and maintain effective working with external agencies to ensure a high-quality physical environment.

In particular, we will liaise with the following agencies:

- Police Scotland
- Glasgow City Council (particularly, Cleansing)
- Community Safety (Environmental taskforce)
- Local shops

6. Prevention

ng homes believe the prevention of estate management problems is one of the most effective ways of ensuring tenants can enjoy living in a well cared for environment.

ng homes will therefore seek to minimise estate management problems by:

- Tenants will be issued with a Tenancy Agreement that is written in easily understood language.
- The Association is conscious that written information is not always the most effective way of getting a message across. Because of this great emphasis is placed on the value of the sign up process as an opportunity for the housing officer to ensure that the tenant is clear about their responsibilities.
- The Association will carry out New Tenant Visits once the tenant has moved into the property. These are an opportunity for the housing officer to identify and deal with any problems being experienced.

7. How We Will Achieve/Deliver

- By offering support and advice to all our tenants from start of tenancy and ensuring they understand their responsibilities and that of the Association
- The Association will ensure that Housing Management staff undertakes regular inspections of common areas, backcourts, common closes, gardens etc.
- Monitor the services provided by our Contactors on a regular basis i.e. Close Cleaning, Landscape Maintenance.
- Tenants will usually be asked to put complaints in writing particularly where they are of a serious nature or where they are repeat complaints. Anonymous complaints may be dealt with at the discretion of senior staff.
- All complaints will be recorded. The volume and category of complaints, the action taken and the outcomes will all be monitored. The Association will set target response times for action and a report will be given to the Area Committee on performance measured against these on a quarterly basis.
- Where the Association intervenes, it will take the following action as appropriate:
 - Informal visits
 - Formal visiting or writing to tenants or a number of tenants to advise them of the problem and to outline a course of action
 - Recharging tenants for work that is a tenant's responsibility
 - Liaise with other agencies
- Housing Management will avoid the use of legal action in relation to estate management as far as possible but will be prepared to take such action where a tenant is in breach of their tenancy agreement and all other action has been tried and has failed to remedy the situation.
- The decision to initiate legal action will be taken by the Housing Manager. All legal action will be reported to the Area Committee, who will decide whether or not to proceed with any court action to recover possession of the property.

8. Equal Opportunities and Implications

The Association will ensure the promotion of equal opportunities by publishing information in different community languages and other formats such as large print, tape and Braille, as required.

The Association will ensure that no individual is discriminated against on grounds of sex or marital status, on racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual

orientation, language or social origin, or other personal attributes, including beliefs, or opinions, such as religious or political beliefs.

All communication with tenants or other customers will be in 'plain language' and it will be made clear who the most appropriate person is to contact in the event of a query. The Association will make appropriate arrangements for communicating with tenants and other customers who have special needs such as people with sight, hearing or learning difficulties, for example by using signers.

7. Sustainability Implications

This policy has no direct sustainability implications.

8. Risk Management

The Board will consider the risk management factors of Estate Management including:

- Non-compliance with outcomes from the Social Housing Charter,
- The potential harm to the Association's reputation as a provider of quality housing developments as a consequence of the poor application of this policy.

9. Performance Monitoring

To measure the performance, the success of this policy and the associated procedures, quarterly information is provided to the Associations Board and Area Committees. These reports monitor the associations performance against targets association wide and also be individual patches.

10. Complaints Procedure

Any tenant, sharing owner and owner may submit a complaint, using the Association's complaints procedure if it is felt that the Association has failed not to correctly apply the Estate Management policy.

11. Data Protection

ng homes recognise the importance of data protection legislation in protecting the rights of individuals in relation to personal information that we may handle and use about them, whether on computer or in paper format. ng homes will ensure that our practices in the handling and use of personal information during the processes and procedures outlined in this policy comply fully with data protection legislation. More information is available from our Data Protection Officer.