

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

DATE APPROVED: 29 MAY 2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Our Estate Management Policy is integral to the overall environment in which our properties are located and sets out our approach to the management and standards of the surrounding environment in our ownership.

2.0 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 The aim of the estate management policy is to manage the environment around our properties and any common areas effectively, to ensure that the neighbourhood is a well-maintained and safe place to live.

In order to achieve this aim, the association promotes efficient procedures to:

- maintain the environment around our properties and common areas to a good standard
- ensure tenants are fully aware of their own responsibilities and of the Association's responsibilities
- encourage tenant interest and involvement in ensuring their neighbourhood is well maintained and safe
- endeavour to prevent problems occurring and deal promptly and effectively with problems when they do arise
- develop and maintain good working relationships with other agencies, such as Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue and various departments within West Dunbartonshire Council including Environmental Health, Waste Services, and Greenspace.

3.0 EQUALITIES

3.1 As part of our commitment to equal opportunities, this policy can be made available in large print or audio tape or translated into another language if required. We are also committed to meeting Outcome 1 of the Scottish Social Housing Charter which states that social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that: every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

4.0 LEGISLATION

4.1 This policy takes account of the Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001 and 2014.

5.0 SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER, APRIL 2017

5.1 This policy takes account of the requirement to report to the Scottish Housing Regulator annually on the Annual Return on the Charter, where several outcomes link to the provision of effective estate management. Outcome 6 of the Charter states that Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure as far as reasonably possible that: tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.

5.2 This policy also links with Outcome 11 of the Scottish Social Housing Charter 2017 – Tenancy Sustainment, which states that Social landlords ensure that tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

5.3 Charter Outcome 13 – Value for money – is also relevant and this states that Social landlords shall manage all aspects of their businesses so that – tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for rent and other service charges they pay.

6.0 POLICY SCOPE

6.1 Estate management covers a range of issues including maintaining the environment around properties, maintaining common areas and providing services, advice and support. The main areas of concern are:

- cleaning and maintenance of common closes and stairs
- maintenance of landscaped areas, backcourts, gardens and play parks in the ownership of the Association
- refuse disposal and litter
- vandalism and graffiti
- car parking and abandoned cars
- control of pets
- security
- street lighting
- health and safety
- fire safety

7.0 OUR APPROACH

7.1 To maintain the environment around our properties and common areas to a good standard, we will:

- carry out reactive, planned and cyclical maintenance in accordance with the Association's maintenance policy
- engage contractors to provide cleaning and ground maintenance services
- carry out regular inspections of common areas, backcourts and gardens to ensure they are maintained to an acceptable standard
- monitor the performance of contractors continuously

7.2 To ensure tenants are fully aware of their own responsibilities and of the Association's responsibilities, we will:

- emphasise these responsibilities prior to allocation of property and throughout the duration of the tenancy
- highlight estate management issues through home visits, letters and regular newsletters

7.3 To encourage tenant interest and involvement in ensuring their neighbourhood is well maintained and safe, we will:

- carry out regular consultation, including tenant meetings
- promote participation in wider action initiatives
- promote participation in the annual garden competition
- promote direct liaison with police, fire and other agencies

8.0 PREVENTION

8.1 To endeavour to prevent problems occurring and deal promptly and effectively with problems when they do arise, we will:

- carry out regular inspections of common areas, backcourts and gardens
- use CCTV where appropriate
- highlight tenants' responsibilities
- in conjunction with Fire and Rescue Scotland, all new tenants will be offered the option to take up a home fire safety visit; we will also liaise with the Fire and Rescue Scotland where we have any fire safety concerns about how best to assist individual tenants to manage and sustain their tenancies
- liaise with the dog warden service where we have concerns about either stray dogs or dog owner's ability to manage their dog(s)

- we will inspect each development on a regular basis. The Association will review the frequency of inspections at least annually. Information from the inspections will be used to inform action, planning, our asset management strategy, our budget preparation and setting of service and factoring charges.
- provide a free garden maintenance service for anyone above pension age or anyone who has a disability, provided there is no-one in the household who is over 16 and able to do this.

9.0 PROCEDURES

9.1 Comprehensive procedures for all aspects of estate management are specified in housing management and maintenance procedure documents.

10.0 TRAINING

10.1 This policy will be underpinned by training for all staff involved in any aspect of estate management.

11.0 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

11.1 Estate management reports, highlighting main areas of concern and monitoring the performance of contractors, will be presented to the Management Committee on a monthly basis.

11.2 Tenant surveys are carried out every six months to monitor satisfaction levels with the performance of cleaning and ground maintenance contractors. We use a company to do continuous monitoring (quarterly surveys of a percentage of tenants) and this includes questions on satisfaction with management of the neighbourhood. The results of these surveys are presented to committee by the Director quarterly.

12.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

12.1 In the course of their general duties all members of our staff will look for, and report on, any signs of deterioration to our properties or common areas and are required to participate in training on this policy and associated procedures.

12.2. The results of surveys carried out on our behalf are presented to the Committee by the Director quarterly.

12.3 The Housing Manager is responsible for staff training in all aspects of this policy and associated procedures.

12.4 The Management Committee has responsibility for overseeing the effective implementation of this policy.

13.0 COMPLAINTS

13.1 Complaints regarding estate management will be referred, in the first instance, to the Association's Housing Manager. If the matter is not resolved, tenants or former tenants will be advised to complain in accordance with the Association's complaints procedure, copies of which are available on our website, and at our office and available from staff.

13.2 If, after exhausting the Association's complaints procedure a tenant or former tenant is still unhappy, they should contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO):

- Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS

Telephone 0800 377 7330 (free phone) or 0131 225 5300

Fax 0800 377 7331
Text 0790 049 4372
E-mail ask@spsso.org.uk

SPSO
Freepost

14 REVIEW OF POLICY

14.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by any relevant changes in legislation; guidance or arising from practice.