

1.0 POLICY AIMS

- 1.1 To demonstrate the importance of estate management services.
- 1.2 To introduce initiatives that encourage residents to work together to achieve high standards of maintenance in the common areas.
- 1.3 To deliver clear, consistent and appropriate responses to estate management issues.
- 1.4 To outline expectations in respect of the ongoing recording, monitoring and evaluation of estate management services.
- 1.5 To demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement.
- 1.6 To ensure compliance with legislation, performance standards and good practice.
- 1.7 To minimise risk to the Association.

2.0 CONTEXT/REFERENCES

- 2.1 GWHA's Estate Management Policy deals with the management of the communal and physical aspects of the building and the immediate environment. Depending on the issue, it is likely that reference may also be required to the policies on Anti-social Behaviour, Service Charges, Void Management, Racial Harassment, Pets, Permission to Operate a Business, Car Parking and Grounds for Repossession.

3.0 DEFINITION

In the absence of a recognised definition, GWHA will define estate management as:

“property management and services to residents that enable the quiet enjoyment of their homes and a decent, safe and secure environment.”

4.0 LEGISLATION

- 4.1 The responsibility and scope for dealing with estate management will depend largely on the nature and source of a nuisance.
- 4.2 Landlords have a general duty to all persons entering premises in their ownership to take reasonable care to see that they will not suffer injury or damage because of the state of the premises. Where premises are tenanted and the landlord is responsible for repair and maintenance, the landlord owes a duty of reasonable care to any person on the premises and their personal property.
- 4.4 The Local Authority (Environmental Protection Services and the Police) are the agency with significant powers and ability to enforce many of the laws relating to the environment and are able to deal with most forms of nuisance including noise pollution, abandoned vehicles, traffic offences, air quality (dust/debris), litter, accumulation of rubbish and filthy or verminous premises.
- 4.5 Relevant legislation is numerous in this area and includes the following:
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990
 - Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978 (abandoned vehicles)
 - Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and 2001
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
 - Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Occupiers Liability (Scotland) Act 1960
 - Crime and Disorder Act 1998
 - Anti-social Behaviour Act 2004

5.0 COMPLIANCE

5.1 Legislation

This Policy complies with the terms of the legislation as outlined at section 4.0.

5.2 Performance Standards

GS1.2 Policies and Procedures

We have high quality written policies and procedure to guide our actions.

AS1.10 Estate Management

We manage the environment around our properties and any common areas effectively, to ensure that the neighbourhood is an attractive, well-maintained and safe place to live.

5.3 GWAH Aims

No. 3 To demonstrate commitment to equal opportunities in all areas of the Association's activities.

No. 4 To adopt best practice in all activities and ensure a quality service.

5.4 Good Practice

Reference has been made to the following documents in the development of this Policy.

CIH Recommended Standards: Estate Management

Housemark example of good practice from Leeds City Council

SFHA Raising Standards in Housing – Anti-social Behaviour

CIOH Good Practice Briefings No. 8 and 14

Local Environment Charter for Scotland

6.0 SERVICE QUALITY GUARANTEE

Following consultation with residents, GWAH introduced a Service Quality Guarantee in January 2005. The following standards will be incorporated to the SQG.

6.1 Our Promise to Residents

- We will zone our properties to reflect inspection priority status and to ensure our resources are focussed where they are most needed.
- We will regularly inspect common close areas, back-courts, car parks, play-facilities and other areas that impact on the quality of life of our residents. The inspection frequency will reflect the priority status.
- We will review the inspection priority status at least 6-monthly. We will consult with you on proposed changes to the inspection priority status.
- We will work with the Local Authority and with local residents, Tenants Group and other partners to identify estate management solutions and produce positive environmental outcomes.
- We will closely monitor the garden/back-court maintenance and staircleaning services to ensure service quality and value for money.
- We will consult with residents on the quality of service provision and we will provide performance information at least annually in our Newsletters to establish the highest levels of service satisfaction.

6.2 Our Expectations of Residents

- You will take care to properly and securely dispose of refuse in the binstores provided.
- You will work with your neighbours to keep common areas clean and tidy and clear of bulk or personal items.
- You will promptly notify the police, the Association and other relevant agencies of incidences of vandalism, graffiti or wilful damage to the fabric of the property or the immediate environment.
- You will willingly co-operate with the Association, the police and other partners to ensure that relevant action can be taken against any individual or group who wilfully neglect or damage the common areas, the fabric of the property or the immediate environment.
- You will alert relevant authorities, including the Police and Environmental Services to noise nuisance and other nuisances for which these agencies are responsible.

7.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

HAZARD	RISKS	F	S	EXISTING CONTROLS		ADDITIONAL CONTROLS		REVIEW FREQ
				CONTROL	RESP	CONTROL	RESP	
Public health Hazard Personal Injury/death	L/Auth Stat Notice	L	M	Estate Management	TSM			
	Ins claim Tenants withholdrent	L	M	Property Inspections	TSM/PSM			
			M	Buildings Insurance				
			L	Public Liability Insurance	AD-B			
			L	Approved List of Contractors	AD-B PSM			
				Repairs Response Times	PSM			
				Right to Repair Policy	PSM			
				Service Contractor Monitoring	PSM			
				TSM				

8.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 8.1 GWHA aim to ensure that all residents are able to have quiet enjoyment of their homes and a decent, safe and secure environment.
- 8.2 Estate management services are developed in conjunction with residents and are responsive to local needs. The services are planned, adequately resourced and effectively managed to deliver successful outcomes and maintain high standards of performance.

9.0 POLICY

- 9.1 All residents who live within GWHA tenanted or factored properties benefit from the Association’s dedicated estate management service.
- 9.2 The roles and responsibilities of tenants will be clearly detailed in the Tenancy Agreement and will be reinforced at the Tenancy sign-up, the settling-in visit and in the Tenant’s Handbook.
- 9.3 Clauses, similar to those in the Tenancy Agreement, will be incorporated to the Common Factoring Agreement for owners and, in the case of all future new build developments, a real condition will be incorporated to the Deed of Conditions.
- 9.4 Newsletter articles, at least annually, will remind residents of their obligations in respect of the common areas.

9.5 Partnership Working

- 9.5.1 Effective partnerships will be fostered with other agencies (including police, social work, cleansing or environmental services) with the aim of encouraging joint resolution of issues.
- 9.5.2 In the case of tenants who are vulnerable for any reason (e.g. including mental or physical health, age, gender, lifestyle, language or impairment) the support of specialist services will be sought to assist in addressing and/or supporting successful resolution of estate management matters.

9.6 Preventative Measures

- 9.6.1 At the design stage and in the LCC/major repairs programme, consideration will be given to introducing measures that design-out crime and improve sound insulation. These measures may include increased lighting, home security initiatives such as upgrading door locks/security chains and designated safe play areas for children.
- 9.6.2 With the support of residents, staircleaning and garden maintenance contractors will be employed to provide these services on a regular and continuous basis. The standards of service provision will be monitored as part of the regular estate management visits.

10.0 PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

10.1 Inspection Priority Status

- 10.1.1 All properties will be categorised (A to D) to reflect inspection priority status. The priority status will take account of factors such as:
- a) the presence of staircleaning/back-court maintenance services
 - b) the extent to which residents work together to maintain the common areas
 - c) proximity of the property to "hot spot" areas such as undeveloped/derelict land, bus stops, shops, pubs etc
 - d) tenure/household mix and building density
 - e) risk management (e.g. play areas)
- 10.1.2 The priority status will be reviewed at least 6-monthly and there will be consultation with residents on any proposed change to the priority category.

10.2 Inspection Schedule

- 10.2.1 The inspection schedule will depend on the priority status as follows:
- | | | |
|---------------------|---|--------------------|
| Priority Category A | - | weekly visits |
| Priority Category B | - | fortnightly visits |
| Priority Category C | - | monthly visits |
| Priority Category D | - | quarterly visits |

10.3 Property Inspections

- 10.3.1 Property inspections will be identify a broad range of issues, including:
- a) security of the property
 - b) requirement for common repairs
 - c) condition of common close, back-court/garden and bin stores
- 10.3.2 A formal Property Inspection Form (PIF) will be completed on each and every visit to the property.
- 10.3.3 Estate management issues will be addressed on site where possible, either through speaking directly with residents or by posting an Estate Management Notice through individual household doors.
- 10.3.4 Where the issue is of a general nature (e.g. condition of bin store/unlocked close doors) a letter will be issued to residents at the earliest opportunity and generally within 5 working days. The letter will specify the date and time of the property inspection and will advise of the action required.
- 10.3.5 If the issue remains unresolved by the time of the follow-up visit, photographs will be taken as a formal record and further details will be recorded on a PIF.
- 10.3.6 Repairs identified at the property inspection will be actioned in accordance with the Repairs Response Times.

11.0 RESOLUTION

11.1 Informal Remedies

11.1.1 Close Meetings

Where appropriate, a Close Meeting will be organised to discuss estate management issues and with the aim of achieving the co-operation of residents to resolve ongoing concerns.

The Close Meeting will explore solutions to the particular issue, including:

- stair/back-court rota systems
- introduction of service charges
- options for improving security

A detailed note of the meeting will be taken and a copy sent to all residents within 5 working days of the meeting.

11.1.2 Service Charges

Where the introduction of service charges is considered as a possible solution to an estate management issue, a site visit will be arranged with a service contractor to identify works and obtain costs. The specification and cost will be formalised with the contractor, in writing, within 5 working days.

If service charges are agreed as the preferred solution, tenants will be asked to sign a Deed of Variation to the Tenancy Agreement. Owners will be asked to sign an Agreement to Pay mandate.

11.1.3 Rechargeable Repairs

Whilst every effort will be made to encourage residents to take responsibility for resolving estate management issues, in instances where a delay is likely to cause a risk to health, safety or security, action will be taken by the Association and any associated cost will be passed to residents as a rechargeable repair. An example may include spillage of oil on the stairs/back-court area.

11.2 Formal Remedies

11.2.1 In the event that informal remedies fail to resolve ongoing estate management issues, the matter will be progressed under Category 2 of the Anti-social Behaviour Policy.

12.0 ESTATE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

12.1 Good Close/Garden Competitions

12.1.1 An annual Good Close/Garden Competition is held with the aim of:

- a) recognising the areas where residents devote a great deal of time, effort and resources to improving their surroundings;
- b) encouraging all residents to take pride in their properties and improve on the current standard of maintenance;
- c) fostering good relations between residents;
- d) encouraging participation in the Association's activities/services

12.1.2 Nominations will be sought for each of the competition categories, with nominations accepted from residents and/or staff.

12.1.3 The competitions will be judged around May/June by a minimum 2 Members of the Management Committee.

12.1.4 Nominees will be invited to the Association's Annual General Meeting in June where competition winners will be announced.

12.2 Rent Reward Scheme

12.2.1 Compliance with the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, which includes responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the common areas, is a pre-requisite to membership of the Rent Reward Scheme.

13.0 ESTATE MANAGEMENT COMPLAINTS

13.1 Estate Management complaints, defined as Category 1 complaints in the Anti-social behaviour Policy will tend to be occasional breaches of the tenancy of a relatively minor nature and which are usually capable of being dealt with by front-line staff with day to day responsibility for the service. Examples include:

- i) general domestic noise
- ii) noise from amplified music (i.e. TV, radios etc)
- iii) late-night parties
- iv) abandoned cars
- v) car repairs in the street
- vi) nuisance caused by animals
- vii) nuisance caused by using the property for commercial or business purposes
- viii) nuisance caused by children
- ix) neglect of garden or cleaning responsibilities
- x) litter and rubbish dumping

13.1.2 Action to resolve Category 1 complaints will be initiated within 5 working days.

14.0 COMPLAINTS

15.1 Complaints arising from the implementation of this Policy will be dealt with under the Service Quality Guarantee - Complaints and Feedback Policy.

15.0 DELEGATED AUTHORITY

16.1 Delegated authority is granted by the Management Committee to:

16.0 REVIEW

17.1 In accordance with Performance Indicators, this Policy will be reviewed again in 2008, or earlier if circumstances dictate.

17.2 Where the review is likely to result in a change that will significantly affect tenants, there will be consultation prior to the change being introduced.