



# **Estate Management & Environmental Policy**

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines the way in which Govanhill Housing Association (GhHA) will deliver estate management and environmental services and how we will work in partnerships with residents, local agencies and contractors.
- 1.2 Estate Management refers to the effective management of the Associations properties, the environment around our properties and any common areas to ensure the neighbourhood is an attractive, well-maintained, safe and secure place to live.
- 1.3 Estate Management covers a wide range of services and issues including:
  - Enforcing tenancy conditions and ensuring compliance with title conditions
  - Management of communal areas
  - Maintenance of the environment
  - Providing services to enhance our communities.
- 1.4 Good estate management contributes to pride and satisfaction within an area and has a correlation to a feeling of safety and security for residents and therefore we will work closely with partners and key agencies for the benefit of our full community in Govanhill and Merrylee.

## 2.0 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The overall aim of this policy is to ensure our neighbourhoods and communities are well-maintained and that residents can enjoy a quiet home in a safe, attractive environment that they can take pride in.
- 2.2 The specific objectives of this policy are:
  - To ensure that tenants, sharing owners and owners are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the upkeep of their property and surrounding area.
  - To ensure that tenants, sharing owners and owners are aware of the Associations responsibilities in relation to estate management and the environment.
  - To ensure that tenants, sharing owners and owners are aware of the responsibilities of Glasgow City Council, Police Scotland, Public Health etc.
  - To carry out regular estate management walkabouts of area and link in with other agencies/departments to resolve any issues identified.
  - To closely monitor the performance of contractors.
  - To ensure our staff are visible in the community and are proactive in efforts to take early action to enforce tenancy conditions.
  - To comply with legal duties, regulatory requirements and good practice.
  - To ensure good relationships are developed with the community and encourage interest and involvement for the mutual benefit of the Association.
  - To create sustainable tenancies and provide properties that are safe and attractive in a neighbourhood that is well-maintained.

## 3.0 Compliance with Performance Standards, Legislation and Good Practice

- 3.1 The responsibility and scope for dealing with estate management will depend largely on the nature and source of a nuisance.
- 3.2 Landlords have a general duty to all persons entering premises in their ownership to take reasonable care to see that they do not suffer injury or damage because of the state of the premises.
- 3.3 The estate management and environmental policy meets with legislative and good practice requirement further details are included in Appendix 1
- 3.5 This policy is also related /linked to the following policies:
  - Anti-social Behaviour
  - Repairs & Maintenance
- 3.6 Both the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement and Short Secure Tenancy Agreement offered by GhHA outlines tenants' legal and contractual obligations in relation to maintenance and use of common parts and shared spaces.
- 3.7 Owners responsibilities are outlined within Deeds of Conditions

## 4.0 Service Standards

- 4.1 Estate Management Inspections - All staff of the Association have a shared responsibility for looking after the Associations properties and area. Tenancy Services and Factoring staff will visit their designated streets/areas in their "patch" on a regular basis to monitor the condition of the Associations areas of ownership/responsibility. Any issues noted will be recorded for action in line with this policy and procedures.
- 4.2 Regular inspections of common areas, closes, stairways, pathways, gardens and such like will take place. See table below in bullet point 4.6 that details frequency of inspections.
- 4.3 Any repair matters noted during estate inspections will be raised on return to the office and dealt with in accordance with our Repairs and Maintenance Policy. Staff will connect with appropriate colleagues and agencies to share information and to ensure the effective implementation of this policy. We will work with other agencies such as cleansing, street Lighting, environmental protection, Road Department, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), close cleaning contractors, environmental contractors etc to remedy problems.

- 4.4 The Director and Head of Tenancy Services will carry out a walkabout of the area at least once per year.
- 4.5 We will actively promote and encourage local residents to attend walkabouts with staff to carry out joint estate management inspection.
- 4.6 Common Areas - Responsibilities for common areas are set out in the Tenancy Agreement between the Association and our tenants. The responsibility of owners for common areas is set out in their title deeds or the Tenements (Scotland) Act. All tenants and owners sharing common areas must keep these areas clean and tidy and comply with any local arrangements for the use and sharing of common parts.
- Common areas include:
  - Entrance doorways
  - Close area/stairs
  - Bin stores
  - Backcourts/drying areas
  - Pathways
  - Driveways/parking bays

The Association will regularly inspect these areas to ensure that they are maintained, kept clean and generally litter free. Where services are provided by another agency e.g. stair lighting, faults will be reported directly to them. Where recurrent problems arise, we will work with the relevant agencies to enable them to be resolved.

Performance Indicator for close/backcourt inspections	
Category A closes /backcourts ( where overall conditions are very good)	Every 3 months
Category B closes (where overall conditions are above satisfactory)	Every 2 months
Category C closes (where overall conditions vary from satisfactory to requiring attention)	Every 1 month (with more frequent visits as required)

- 4.7 We will ensure that repairs (to properties we own or factor) for example controlled entry systems, close doors, close windows, bin stores, loft hatches and any other common repair items are actioned in accordance with our Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

## 5.0 Close Cleaning

- 5.1 Close Cleaning - We provide a weekly close cleaning service to all our tenants living in closes or tenemental properties in order to assist them in their obligation to keep the stairs and closes in a clean and tidy condition.
- 5.2 Our close cleaning contractor has a schedule of works which details what is required to be completed weekly and what is covered on a monthly basis.

## 6.0 Grounds Maintenance

- 6.1 We provide a backcourt/ground maintenance service for tenants in order to assist them in their obligations to keep the area in a clean and tidy condition.
- 6.2 All residents in close, block etc must comply with any local arrangements for use and sharing of back courts/communal areas as advised by the Association.
- 6.3 Individual Gardens - We will ensure that Association tenants maintain gardens in accordance with their Tenancy Agreement. If an Association tenant has exclusive use of a garden, they must take reasonable care to keep it from becoming overgrown, untidy or causing a nuisance.
- 6.4 If gardens are not maintained to a reasonable standard, the tenant will be contacted to find out the reason for this. We will advise the tenant of the action required to remedy the situation and will confirm a date when the garden will be re-inspected.
- 6.5 If there has been no improvement, we may explore legal options or arrange for the necessary work to be completed and recharge the tenant for the cost.
- 6.6 The Association has a Garden Assist Programme whereby tenants who don't have the means or capacity to maintain their front garden may be considered for inclusion in this programme to have their grass/hedges cut by the grounds maintenance contractor.

## 7.0 Disposal of refuse

- 7.1 Household Refuse Disposal - We will work with Glasgow City Council to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided for refuse disposal and recycling.
- 7.2 Bin stores should be kept in a clean and tidy condition by all residents. All residents will be responsible for ensuring that their refuse is disposed of safely and securely in the refuse/recycling bins provided. Our grounds maintenance contractor as part of weekly visits ensures that binstores are swept and any stray bin bags are placed in the bins.
- 7.3 Following the withdrawal of GCC free bulk uplift services and in the interests of good estate management the Association introduced as part of our grounds maintenance contract a fortnightly bulk uplift service Tenants are advised at the start of their tenancy of arrangements and scheduled days for uplift of refuse etc.
- 7.4 Any household waste or bulk items which have been dumped illegally or inappropriately within the grounds of Association owned land or property will be investigated by staff and action taken in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement and/or any relevant legislation.

## 8.0 Fly-tipping

- 8.1 Fly-tipping represents bulk items including black bags/household goods/etc left on streets. Glasgow City Council has the responsibility to remove these items and take action against responsible persons identified.
- Incidents of fly –tipping should be reported directly to GCC via My Glasgow App or by contacting GCC’s main phone line.

## 9.0 Feeding Birds

- 9.1 Feeding Birds - Residents should only feed birds using appropriate bird seed feeders or tables; ground feeding is not permitted.
- 9.2.1 Tenants found to be throwing bird feed out of window may face action taken in accordance with their Tenancy Agreement.

## 10.0 Abandoned Vehicles

- 10.1 Abandoned Vehicles - All tenants will be made aware of their respective responsibility for vehicle parking, as contained in the Tenancy Agreement. No vehicle, caravan, trailer or boat may be parked on communal land unless that land is set aside for parking.

In any event parking should not cause a nuisance or annoyance to neighbours. In the event of parking disputes, we will contact Police Scotland.

- 10.2 Tenants/Owners should ensure that vehicles in their ownership and no longer in use are disposed of appropriately. Where it is suspected that a car has been abandoned this will be reported to Police Scotland and Glasgow City Council for investigation and removal.

## 11.0 Vandalism and Illegal Drug Use

- 11.1 Vandalism/Graffiti/Drug paraphernalia - All incidents of vandalism will be reported to Police Scotland and a crime report number obtained for insurance purposes.
- 11.2 Where a repair arises as a result of vandalism (e.g. re- glazing), the tenant will be responsible for reporting the incident to the police, or the cost of the repair may be recharged to the tenant in accordance with our Rechargeable Repairs Policy.
- 11.3 Where the identity of a perpetrator of acts of vandalism to the Associations’ property is known and is a tenant or a member of a tenant’s household, we will take action

against the tenancy and recharge cost of any works that were required to take place. We may also contact Police Scotland to make them aware of this.

- 11.4 We will take action in accordance with our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy where it is known that an individual has been responsible for an act of vandalism. Graffiti will be removed in accordance with our Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

For clarity our target for removal are as follows:

- Racist/hate crime will be removed within 24 hours.
- Offensive graffiti will be removed within 3 days.
- All other types of graffiti will be removed within 10 days.
- If graffiti takes place in a mixed tenure block our Factoring Team will issue invoices to relevant owner occupiers.
- Any drug paraphernalia found in close will be reported to Police Scotland.
- Any drug paraphernalia will be reported to our contractor for removal.

- 11.5 If drug paraphernalia is found in close Tenancy Services staff will carry out an investigation to identify if the culprit is a tenant of the Association and take action in line with our Anti-Social Behaviour policy.

## 12.0 Pets

- 12.1 Keeping Pets - GhHA accepts that its tenants keeping pets offers significant benefits to their owners and therefore supports responsible pet ownership. Association tenants may keep a domestic pet; however, the Association's written permission must be obtained in advance if the tenant wishes to keep more than one pet. We have a standard application form available from our office which tenants should complete and return to us in order to request permission to keep a pet.
- 12.2 This permission will be withdrawn if the tenant does not properly control their pet, it causes a nuisance.
- 12.3 The number of pets in any one property may be restricted. We will act where a tenant fails to control their pet(s) in terms of the Tenancy Agreement. Should any tenant fail to adhere to the conditions listed in the Tenancy Agreement then we are entitled to require removal of the pet(s)
- 12.4 The keeping of fowl, pigeons or other livestock in Association property, gardens or common parts is forbidden.
- 12.5 Any pet which is prohibited by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 or by any other law is also forbidden.
- 12.6 We will also work closely with Glasgow City Council staff in terms of breaches of the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003.
- 12.7 Stray dogs will be notified to Glasgow City Council, Police Scotland and/or the SSPCA as applicable.
- 12.8 In instances where a dog is considered to pose a danger to the public, we will reserve the right to initiate legal action for removal of the animal.

## 13.0 Vermin/Pests/Insects

- 13.1 Vermin/Pests/Insects - Where vermin, pest and insect infestation is reported and found in common areas/inside tenants homes we will arrange appropriate contractors (this may be Glasgow City Council or our own internal contractor) to undertake remedial works.
- 13.2 Where infestation can be directly attributed to a tenant's living conditions or habits, we will advise the tenant on how best to rectify the situation and ensure it does not re-occur.
- 13.2.1 The Housing Officer will take responsibility for resolving such issues. This may involve other agencies (social work, GP etc.) and actions to ensure compliance with the tenancy conditions.

## 14.0 Bike Storage

- 14.1 GCC offers secure street bike storage for residents in the area. Residents should contact GCC to apply for this service  
<https://cyclehoop.my.site.com/RentalsCommunity/suggestlocation>
- 14.2 Govanhill Housing Association has developed secure off-street bike storage for residents in Langside Road (in between 7 Langside Rd and 11 Langside Rd) of 12 storage spaces. Residents should contact the HA to apply.
- 14.3 The Association also offers options for internal storage of bikes (wall and ceiling racks) free of charge for tenants. Tenants should contact us directly to organise the supply and fit of these devices.

In order to support green living Govanhill Housing Association will continue to explore options to create more bike storage areas for tenants.

## 15.0 Trees

- 15.1 No tenant or owner should cut a tree in a common backcourt area.
- 15.2 Trees in private gardens will normally be the responsibility of the tenant, owner. GhHA may arrange for a tree to be maintained if it becomes a danger to others or interferes with utilities (e.g. overhead cables).
- 15.3 Trees on communal ground owned by GhHA will be maintained by the Association and a periodic review of relevant areas will be carried out to arrange tree safety. This will take into consideration size, condition and location of trees. These will then determine if action is required.
- 15.4 Govanhill Housing Association recognises the many benefits trees provide such as:

- Increased property value in areas with trees.
  - Regulation of local temperatures saving energy on both cooling and heating buildings.
  - Carbon sequestration.
  - Removing both gaseous and particulate pollution from the air
  - Reduction in noise pollution.
  - Controlling flood risk.
  - Enhancing the aesthetic appeal of properties
  - Soil stabilization and preventing topsoil erosion.
  - Help to reduce stress and increase feelings of wellbeing.
  - Wildlife habitat
- 15.5 Govanhill Housing Association will seek to retain trees for as long as possible where it is safe to do so.
- 15.6 Tree pruning may be recommended to mitigate risk or abate a nuisance in the following, but not limited to, circumstances:
- Where branches are causing an obstruction over a public way, right of way, footpath, access to a property. The standard minimum clearances recommended by National Highways are, 2.4 metres over pedestrian accesses, 3 metres over cycleways and bridleways. There is no standard minimum clearance recommended over car parks, but a generally accepted clearance is 4 metres.
  - Where trees are causing an actionable nuisance to an adjoining building or structure (e.g., physically in contact with buildings, roofs, walls, and fences)
  - Where trees restrict repairs and maintenance of property, or authorised construction work.
  - Trees growing close to and likely to obstruct or interfere with street lighting, wires and other services equipment.
  - Where trees need formative pruning to ensure the desired form and to correct structural faults
  - Where trees require removal of diseased material and removal or stabilization of dead wood
  - Where trees require pruning to remedy storm damage, mutilation, or vandalism to make them safe and encourage a good crown structure.

## 16.0 Requests for remedial works

- 16.1 Requests for remedial works arising from complaints below should not be entertained without careful consideration.
- Improve television, internet signals or energy capture of solar panels.
  - Allow more light into properties.
  - Abate nuisance caused by bird droppings, honeydew from aphids, falling leaves, flowers, fruit, or pollen.
  - Abate minor structural damage to non-supporting structures

- Remove a tree where tree roots have entered sewers (tree roots rarely break drains, but roots will enter a broken or damaged drain)
- Remove a tree considered to be too big or too tall.
- Felling may be an appropriate management recommendation if:
  - The tree is dead, dying, or dangerous and a danger to public safety.
  - The tree is causing an obstruction to a public highway, public right of way, access to property or footpath, where the obstruction cannot be overcome by pruning the tree or other reasonable measures.
- The tree is causing a legal nuisance to an adjoining property, where pruning would not address the problem. A “legal nuisance” is one that is actionable in law and a tree cannot be a “legal nuisance” to its owner. Felling is acceptable only when the nuisance is severe and where pruning would not remedy the problem.
- The tree is shown to be a major contributor to soil shrinkage and serious structural damage to buildings, where pruning alone would not provide a solution.
- A tree which is clearly of a size and species inappropriate to its location
- Pruning is not appropriate for the species or will raise the risk for disease, then consideration regarding removal should be given.

## 17.0 Managing Mixed Tenure and fully factored properties

- 17.1 We provide a factoring service to owners in our community. This involves managing and maintaining the common areas to a high standard. Details of what constitutes common areas at each property is set out in the title to the property or, where the titles are silent, the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004. Owners’ responsibility for common areas is set out in the title to their properties or, where the titles are silent, the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004.
- 17.2 We will provide a backcourt maintenance service with the agreement of a majority of the owners at the building.
- 17.3 We will carry out close cleaning at the block with the agreement of the majority of the owners.
- 17.4 Generally, the processes carried out by Factoring staff to deal with estate management issues will reflect those detailed above. The exceptions to this are
- (a) private repairs/maintenance are outwith the remit of Factoring, so any estate management issues affecting private property, for example, pest control treatment needed in a privately owned flat will be the owner’s responsibility; and
- (b) as factor the Association encourages compliance with title conditions, but there may be limited enforcement options.

## 18.0 Private Lanes

- 18.1 Based on the lane strategy developed by Glasgow City Council, the majority of lanes in Govanhill are considered private. This means that the responsibility of maintaining it in good condition lies on the owners/residents of the properties in the closes surrounding the lane. You can find more information by checking the Lane Strategy Toolkit- <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/lanetoolkit>.

## 19.0 Partnership Working

- 19.1 Govanhill HA fully recognises that Estate Management has to be tackled in partnership because no single agency can tackle such a wide-ranging issue in isolation.
- 19.2 Govanhill HA is committed to building and developing effective partnership working with agencies such as Police Scotland, Glasgow City Council including Health and Social Care Partnership, Roads Department, Public Health and other agencies working within our communities.
- 19.3 An Environmental Residents Group is established and will meet regularly to discuss issues and agree action plans.
- 19.4 Govanhill recognises that only by working together with external partners and residents can we successfully deliver on ensuring the communities we serve are vibrant and appealing.

## 20.0 Performance Monitoring

- 20.1 Govanhill HA is committed to delivering continuously improving estate management service. We understand that effective monitoring and reporting is fundamental.
- 20.2 A report will be presented to the Operations Sub-Committee at every meeting.
- 20.3 Periodic satisfaction surveys will be carried out.
- 20.4 Regular staff and resident walkabouts will take place.

## 21.0 Complaints/Appeals

- 21.1 Any tenant/owner who feels that their Estate Management issue has been unfairly dealt with has a right to complain. A complainant dissatisfied with the management of their case should be encouraged to use our Complaints procedure. Our Complaints procedure is available from our office or can be downloaded from our website

GhHA's Estate and Environmental Policy complies with the following legislation, guidances and good practice:

- Housing (Scotland) Acts 1987, 2001, 2006, 2010, 2014
- Civic Government Scotland Act 1982
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1989 & 1991
- Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004
- Anti Social Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 Amendment (Scottish) Regulations 2019

#### The Scottish Social Housing Charter

The Scottish Government, through the Scottish Social Housing Charter, sets the outcomes it expects Housing Associations to achieve for its residents. In terms of how Associations manage their estates and neighbourhoods it states that:

#### Outcome 6 - Estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes

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.