

Estate Management Policy

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Policy/Strategy Control Statement

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3	Service Lead	[REDACTED]
4	Author	[REDACTED]
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Policy Applicable To

Business Area: Homes Plus

Applicable to: [Policy Applicable To]

Amendment Sheet Record

Revision Date	Description of Changes	Approved By	Date Approved

Please summarise the current policy requirements and how this is changed in the new policy.

To provide consistent approach to Estate Management across Homes Plus

Please explain the reason for changes/improvements/new policy.

New Policy to apply to all Homes Plus

Please explain any new actions required to put the policy changes into practice.

n/a

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1.0 Introduction

Places for People Affordable Housing owns and manages a diverse portfolio of properties across the UK. The aim of this policy is to outline how they will be managed to promote safe, clean and desirable places, where our customers want to live.

2.0 References

This Policy reflects the Social Housing Charter outcome: “Tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe”.

3.0 General Principles

We will:

- Visit estates regularly based on risk and tackle any issues identified in a timely and appropriate fashion;
- Take action to rectify any issues identified on scheme in a timely fashion
- Set aside a budget for estate improvements;
- Enforce tenancy agreements and deed of condition requirements relating to estate management in a firm, fair, prompt and sensitive manner;
- Work with other agencies where necessary, including the statutory authorities, to ensure that estate management standards are achieved;
- Ensure wherever possible the safety and security of residents and visitors to our property;
- Ensure that estate management services are adequately resourced and effectively budgeted and controlled.

4.0 Risk based approach

The main way we will meet the above principles is through scheme inspections. The regularity of these inspections will be determined by risk factors such as:

- Communal areas/compliance aspects
- Number of properties
- Tenancy turnover
- Levels of anti-social behaviour
- Environmental issues (i.e. fly tipping)

The above is not exhaustive and colleagues should be flexible to meet the changing needs of an estate.

5.0 Estate Management Services

5.1 Cleaning

We will maintain the cleanliness of communal areas in our ownership in order to ensure the safety and well-being of users.

5.2 Refuse Disposal and Litter

Local authorities are responsible for refuse disposal. We will, in conjunction with the local authority, ensure that the appropriate facilities for the disposal of refuse are provided and properly maintained. We will liaise with the local authority to take action on inappropriate disposal of bulky items, dumping of rubbish and litter.

5.3 Grounds Maintenance

We will maintain all hard and soft environmental and landscaped areas, including roads, car parks and play areas in our ownership to agreed standards. Our staff and those appointed on our behalf will ensure that these standards are maintained by inspecting all environmental and landscaped areas on a regular basis. We will not maintain roads and footpaths which have been “adopted” by the local authority as this is their responsibility, but we will alert them to any problems.

5.4 Private and Shared Gardens

We will ensure that all private and shared gardens in our ownership are maintained to the standard as specified by the tenancy agreement.

When the garden is shared, then each resident shares the obligation to ensure it is used with consideration for others and in compliance with the tenancy agreement.

5.5 Car Parking and Garages

Parking arrangements are often unique to the scheme and area and will be managed at a local level in this context.

We are responsible for the maintenance of communal parking areas and the external maintenance of garages in our ownership. If residents have their own parking space, they are responsible for maintaining it in a clean and tidy condition. Storage and maintenance of vehicles will be managed in accordance with the tenancy agreement.

We will liaise with other agencies where appropriate to resolve parking disputes but cannot guarantee residents a parking space.

Where vehicles are believed to be abandoned this should be investigated via the DVLA and referred to the Local Authority.

5.6 TV Aerials and Satellite Dishes

We require that prior written permission is obtained for satellite dishes or other types of communications equipment. There are some areas/developments where Planning policies do not allow them at all. In most areas, permission will be granted provided that the necessary external permissions have been received and our recommendations are followed. We will require that aerials/dishes be taken down if they have been erected without permission or are causing a nuisance to neighbours.

5.7 Vandalism

We will respond promptly when incidents of vandalism are reported. We will make good any damage caused by vandalism which is not the responsibility of the customer or has been inflicted on empty properties in our ownership. Residents are responsible for making good or paying for damage caused by deliberate acts of vandalism by them, any member of your household or your visitors. Graffiti of an offensive nature, or damage that poses a safety risk will be prioritised. We will refer to the police where appropriate.

5.8 Pets

Refer to the Pet Policy

5.9 Vermin and Pest Control

We will offer advice and assistance to eradicate the problem in customer's homes.

Customers have a responsibility to keep their property in a good and clean condition to prevent infestation of mice, ants etc. Where a hazard is attributable solely to tenant behaviour it would be expected that the tenant should rectify and take the necessary actions to resolve it. Customers should contact their local authority who may charge for the service.

We will respond promptly to reports of vermin and pest infestation in common areas of buildings and arrange inspections to ensure the safety of tenants and our properties.

5.10 Items left in unoccupied properties

Places for People have a responsibility to make the best use of its housing stock to support its social aims and those of the Authorities in which it works. As such it will act reasonably and promptly to bring empty properties back into use as quickly as possible.

Where a property is empty following a termination by a customer, Places for People will clear the property of any remaining items following the end of the tenancy. We may recharge customers for the clearance of such items and possession.

Where a property is empty following an abandonment, eviction or the death of the customer, we will take reasonable steps to contact the customer, family or those supporting them and make arrangements for belongings to be collected. This will include the service of a Tort notice and a reasonable time frame. We would consider any vulnerabilities or other factors when deciding what is reasonable.

Where contact cannot be made or the customer (or their representative) fails to act within a reasonable time frame, we will dispose of any items remaining in the property.

6.0 Training

Training on the Estate Management Policy and the associated procedures will be provided for all staff who are likely to deal directly with Estate Management issues.

7.0 Complaints

All customers have the right to complain if they feel that an Estate Management issue has not been dealt with in accordance with our policy. If you want to complain please contact the office for a copy of our Complaints leaflet.