



Draft Policy on :	Estate Management
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Compliant with Scottish Social Housing Charter	Equalities; Communication; Participation; Quality of Housing; Repairs, maintenance and improvements;Estate Management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes.
Compliant with Tenant Participation Strategy:	Yes
Compliant with Equality & Diversity:	Yes
Compliant with Business Plan:	Yes

Date of Approval :	July 2018
Date for Review :	July 2020

Responsible Officer:	Director of Customer Services
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This policy is available in different formats for example, if you have difficulty with sight or need a translated copy, please contact us.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines the way in which Barrhead Housing will deliver estate management services and how we will work in partnership with residents and other agencies to achieve sustainable communities. We recognise that good quality housing needs to be coupled with a decent quality neighbourhood, to make our areas desirable and sustainable in the long term.
- 1.2 Barrhead Housing Association clearly understands that the efficient and effective management of this policy is crucial to maintaining the good appearance of the properties that we own and determines how our properties are valued and perceived both by our tenant's, our residents and by the wider neighbouring communities.
- 1.3 By taking prompt action, the Association will minimise occasions where the appearance of our properties and the surrounding environment deteriorates. Such deterioration can have a detrimental effect on the neighbourhood and subsequently the ability to re-let houses, which in turn can affect the sustainability of the Association and the wider community.
- 1.3 Estate Management can be defined as the term which refers to services which aim to allow residents to have a quiet enjoyment of their homes and a decent, safe and secure environment to live in. It can therefore cover a wide range of activities which focus both upon the people living in an area and on the physical environment of the areas itself.
- 1.4 The overall aim of this policy and the associated procedures is to provide guidelines that set out clear lines of responsibility, is transparent, understandable and easily accessible to staff, tenant's and members of the public on all issues related to the management of the Association's properties and estates.
- 1.5 We recognise that a decent quality neighbourhood is not solely dependent on the quality of our estate management services, and relies on a broad range of organisations to work together, including: the local community; other service providers such as Council Departments; Community Safety and the Police.

2 POLICY BACKGROUND

2.1 *The Scottish Social Housing Charter most relevant to this policy is:*

- *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*

2.2 The Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement details the responsibilities of both Barrhead as the landlord and of the tenant in relation to Estate Management.

Under Section 2 – Use of the House and Common Parts, Barrhead will:

- a) Ensure that it provides (either directly or indirectly) the estate management services for which it is responsible as a landlord.
- b) Ensure that all tenants accept their estate management responsibilities as identified in the Tenancy Agreement.
- c) Ensure that appropriate action is taken against any tenant failing to accept their responsibilities

3 POLICY AIMS

The following are the main aims identified as necessary to ensure the successful and efficient management of this policy.

- To enable our residents to have quiet enjoyment of their home with decent, safe and secure surroundings
- To have a transparent and easily accessible Policy which meets good practice and encourages effective coordination between all those responsible for estate delivery in our neighbourhoods
- Be proactive in our approach for dealing with estate management issues in order to have a positive effect on customers satisfaction and minimise any safety issues by taking strong, affirmative action
- To minimise the turnover of stock and reduce any estate management issues

- To ensure effective communication between the Association and our residents by highlighting estate management issues and procedures in our publications including newsletters, posters open days and social media platforms.
- To ensure that relevant staff make regular inspections and maintain a high visible presence in our areas
- Provide a range of genuine opportunities for resident involvement to motivate our residents in taking control over any issues that affect their general environment.
- To liaise with appropriate agencies such as East Renfrewshire Council, Police Scotland, The Scottish Fire Service and local community groups with the aim of achieving a good, safe physical environment in all of the Association's geographical areas.
- To ensure that communal cleaning standards and responsibilities are made clear and maintained by residents and enforced by the Association.
- To ensure that estate management services are planned, adequately resourced and effectively budgeted for to protect our investment in our stock and environment to the highest possible standard whilst also representing Value for Money.
- To ensure that all repairs to door entry systems, lighting, removal of graffiti etc. are carried out quickly and efficiently
- Build and design estates that contribute to the overall aims and objective of Barrhead Housing.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate all aspects of the estate management service including customer satisfaction with our services and the physical environment
- To provide, manage and maintain quality affordable housing
- To improve service delivery to resident's satisfaction and expectations
- To build and maintain properties to resident's satisfaction and expectations
- To enhance and maintain the quality of environment, security and health of our residents

- To ensure sustainability in provision, management and maintenance of our housing stock
- To promote inclusion and equality for our resident's and their communities;

4. Estate Management Implementation

- 4.1 The Association will ensure that the provision of the estate management service is appropriate and responsive to local needs.

When signing up for their new home, new tenant's will be provided with information, advice and assistance about estate management matters including:

- A copy of the Tenant's Handbook
- An explanation of the terms of their Scottish Secure tenancy (SST) or Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST), and in particular matters relating to estate management issues.
- All matters relating to anti-social behaviour and harassment, racial harassment, including reports of graffiti and deliberate damage and issues concerning substance misuse are referred to in our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

- 4.2 Barrhead's Estate Management Service will include:

- A responsive approach to complaints from residents about the physical environment (complaints about neighbours are covered in our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy).
- The management and maintenance of communal areas and open spaces.
- Removing the risk of items causing an obstruction to access or exit routes in the event of an emergency.
- Controlling/restricting the use of combustible materials to remove any associate risk in our communal areas.

- The day-to-day management and maintenance of the external fabric of the properties.
- The monitoring of services provided by other contractors.
- The monitoring of tenants obligations in respect of estate management and proactive early action to deal with any issues arising.
- Arranging estate walkabouts between Customer Services staff, Senior Staff and local residents groups on an agreed cycle.
- Provide clear guidance on the routes available to staff to ensure policy aims and objectives are effectively carried out.

5 MANAGING MIXED TENURE ESTATES

- 5.1 We provide a factoring service to owners who live in mixed tenure estates where the Association manages rented property.

Complementing these services are the associated estate management services which benefit the whole neighbourhood and also help to maintain property values within an estate. In providing such services we will ensure that:

- There is clear information provided for owners in respect of Barrhead and individual owners' responsibilities in relation to areas of common ownership.
- We put in place quality contracted common maintenance services which offer value for money to Barrhead owners
- There is effective collection of common charges for common maintenance services to ensure that owners contribute their fair share towards the costs of providing services.

6 Estate Management Services

6.1 Garden Maintenance

It is a condition of the Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement that all tenants who have access to a garden within the boundaries of the property allocated to them, must keep their garden tidy and free from rubbish. All new tenants who are allocated a property where there is either a private or shared garden area, will have their responsibilities in maintaining a garden to a reasonable standard explained to them in full. Gardens will be subject to regular inspections.

In situations where a resident fails to maintain their garden/hedges, whether shared or private, the Association is entitled to decide exactly what work needs to be done to bring the garden/hedges up to standard. This will be done in consultation with the resident concerned and the decision taken will be binding. If the identified work is not completed the Association may do the work itself and recharge the resident for the work. This may include the complete removal of overgrown hedges to the removal of unsafe items left within their garden areas. All costs incurred may be recharged where a tenant consistently fails to undertake their responsibilities.

Advice and practical assistance will be offered to residents who fail to maintain their gardens because of mobility problems or ill-health. The Council no longer provide assistance where organisations such as "Oskars", a Paisley based charity, may be able to provide some gardening assistance (for a fee). Oskars can be contacted on 0141 847 6626.

6.2 Void Property Gardens

During the growing season normally March to October, this will be undertaken in conjunction with the void letting standard.

6.3 Common Area Landscaping

The Association will maintain common areas to a clean and tidy standard, including play areas which it owns.

This will be managed by regular inspections of both the play areas and common ground.

The Association will ensure that paths and pedestrian walkways in our ownership are well maintained.

Where incidents of graffiti, faulty/damaged communal lighting or fencing are reported, the Association will remove such graffiti or repair reported faults/damage within the 7 working days. Offensive graffiti will be treated as an emergency and removed immediately.

6.4 Communal Cleaning/Areas

The Association recognises that it is necessary to ensure that the flatted properties we own are kept clean and tidy so that the condition of the properties and surrounding areas do not deteriorate, and remain in a condition suitable for re-letting.

6.4.1 In line with their tenancy agreement, or, if an owner, with their title deeds, general residents will be responsible for cleaning stairs and windows. This is usually from and including their landing down to the start of the next landing and will be expected to take their turn of common entrance areas.

All new tenants who are allocated a flatted property where there is a common entrance, shared walkway and/or stairs, will have their responsibilities in keeping the common areas clean and tidy explained to them in full.

6.4.2 The Association will monitor the cleanliness of all flatted communal areas on a regular basis. In situations where a tenant cannot agree on the arrangements for keeping the common areas clean and tidy, or fail to do the work, the Association will decide exactly what work needs to be done to bring the communal areas up to standard. This may include setting up a rota. If the identified work is not completed the Association may arrange for the work to be carried out and recharge the tenant for the work.

6.4.3 In some flatted properties a service to clean the communal areas is provided. Where such a service is provided, a service charge is added to the rent and paid by the tenant to cover the cost for the work done.

6.4.4 The Association appreciate that people want to make and keep their surroundings nice. However the health and safety of our residents is paramount and the Association want to minimise all fire safety hazards that create risks.

As such, the Association have adopted a zero tolerance approach in the keeping of any items within a close or communal area which create risks, which include, but are not restricted to:

- * Pushchairs / Buggies / children's car seats/footwear
- * Shopping Trolleys
- * Refuse bags
- * Children's toys and play furniture
- * Bicycles
- * Washing Machines / tumble dryers and other white goods waiting to be disposed of
- * Wooden furniture / upholstered seating.
- * Plastic decorations/rugs/window coverings

- * Cleaning materials/mops
- * Seasonal items
- * Plants, pots, ladders,

- * No personal belongings in communal cupboards

- * No keeping of mobility scooters within close/common areas.

In some of the above cases, the Association staff will consider/identify where possible alternative methods of storage.

The Association staff will remove any items posing a danger immediately and may consider recharging full costs back to residents concerned.

Guidelines on other common facilities such as laundries and drying areas are given to those tenants where appropriate.

6.5 Door Entry Systems

Most of the Association's flatted properties have a shared entrance door. In such properties the entrance door may be fitted with a door entry system to prevent unauthorised access to the building. These systems are designed with the safety and security of tenants in mind and are also a useful deterrent against any damage that may occur within the communal areas of building.

Where damage or faults occur, the Association will repair door entry systems within 7 working days. Any deliberate damage, deliberate disabling of the door entry system causing nuisance or disturbance, or vandalism caused to door entry systems will be re-charged (where relevant) to the tenant concerned.

6.6 Abandoned Vehicles

Where the Association identifies abandoned vehicles, trailers and caravans these will be reported to East Renfrewshire Council for uplift and, if appropriate, disposal. A warning notice will be fixed to the vehicle by the Council and if not moved within 14 days action to remove or dispose of the vehicle will be taken. There will be no opportunity for recovery and or compensation. Where an abandoned vehicle is identified as being a danger, the details will be passed to the Police for action.

An abandoned vehicle is any vehicle that is not road taxed or has visible damage and is parked at Association owned properties or parking bays without permission.

6.7 Refuse Disposal/Fly Tipping

The Association recognises the importance of the removal of refuse in the correct manner to prevent unsanitary conditions arising. Residents are expected to put all household refuse for timetabled Council collection in the place allocated, and that such refuse be properly placed in the bins provided.

East Renfrewshire Council is responsible for, and has its own policy for the uplift of large and heavy items for disposal, of which there may be a charge.

In circumstances where fly tipping occurs on land owned by the Association, the identified objects will be reported to East Renfrewshire Council, or an approved Contractor for removal. Where evidence is gathered that establishes the ownership of the waste, costs for removal will be recharged / invoiced.

6.8 Dog Fouling

People who fail to clean up after their dog on public land act could receive a fixed fine under the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003.

The Association will inform our tenants and residents of the health and safety implications of dog fouling. Tenants who allow their pets to foul the garden ground within the boundaries of their property they live in, and who consistently fail to clean up the mess, may have their permission to keep a pet withdrawn. . The Association may also consider eviction proceedings for persistent offenders and deem that tenants allowing dogs to foul in public areas is a serious breach of tenancy.

Residents who allow their pets to foul areas of public ground, parks, pathways etc. will also be reported to the section dealing with health and environmental issues within East Renfrewshire Council and/or the local Dog Warden.

In addition to these measures, authorised staff of East Renfrewshire Council, and Police Officers are able to issue on-the-spot fines against people who do not clean up after their dogs.

A resident's permission to keep a pet may be withdrawn in circumstances where the pet is known to generally cause a nuisance or disturbance to other resident's or members of the public.

6.9 Drying Areas/Balconies

Drying facilities are provided where possible. However the Association does not encourage the use of balconies as drying areas, if a tenant uses the balcony as a drying area action may be taken by the Association against the tenant.

7. Performance Monitoring

- 7.1 It is necessary to collect and analyse good quality information about estate management. In conjunction with service users we will set targets and monitor trends.
- 7.2 We will report as required to the Board, tenants' and residents' associations/groups and relevant contractors. We will also investigate the reasons for failure to meet standards or targets, as indicated by the performance review process and take action where required.
- 7.3 We will evaluate the costs of providing the estate management service to ensure the service provides value for money.

8. Equality & Diversity

Barrhead Housing Association is committed to providing fair and equal treatment to all our customers and to comply with the Equality Act 2010. The Act established 9 protected characteristics (the grounds on which discrimination is unlawful). These cover age, race, sex, religion/belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, gender reassignment, disability and marriage/civil partnership.

We will offer customers a range of options for communicating with us, since requiring to contact us may have to be in writing and this may be a deterrent, for example for people with poor literacy skills, visual impairment, or where first language is not English. We will monitor use of our Estate Management policy and procedure for ethnic origin and disability to ensure that our procedures deliver fair outcomes for different groups of customers.

9. Complaints Policy

Barrhead Housing Association operates a complaints policy that is open and transparent. Should any customer or service user feel the need to make a complaint against an individual or the organisation, the complaints policy and procedures will be implemented.

This is a separate policy and a copy can be received from the Association.

In keeping records about complaints and in allowing access to our files we will comply with the legislative requirements including, Access to Personal at Files Act 1987 and Data Protection Act 1998.

10. Policy Review

The Governing Board will review the Estate Management Policy at least every three years. However, improvements in performance and service delivery may be made on a regular basis to reflect change and in light of various factors such as:

- New or revised legislation
- Changes in good practice
- Organisational change, e.g. revision of operational practices
- Views of tenants and other service users
- Auditing practices
- Resource requirements

11. Confidentiality

Barrhead Housing Association will ensure that any personal information provided by an applicant will be treated as completely confidential by any member of staff who has access to the information. However, in some cases such confidential matters may hinder full investigation of an issue. In such circumstances, the tenant will be consulted and discussions taken forward in a reasonable manner.

12. General Data Protection Regulations

The Association will treat all personal data in line with our obligations under the current General Data Protection Regulations and our own Data Protection Policy Statement, Privacy Policy and Data Retention Policy.

Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided within our employee and resident Fair Processing Notices.