



ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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Review frequency	Every three years
Date of next review	April 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Charing Cross Housing Association believes that effective management of the areas and communities in which it operates is a vital part of the management function and is for the benefit of both the organisation and the residents. From the residents' point of view, the service should ensure that they can live in safe, secure and pleasant environment and, for the Association, it should contribute to protecting its reputation and investment in the stock.

The Estate Management Policy is intended to put in place measures and procedures that will support the Association's objective of offering the highest standards possible in both the services it provides to residents and the quality of their living environment.

2.0 RELATED POLICIES & STRATEGIES

The term 'Estate Management' covers a wide range of diverse activities that collectively are required to provide well maintained neighbourhood and prevent the area deteriorating in appearance and reputation as an attractive place to live. As such, many of the specific tasks and function are covered in dedicated policies including;

- Inspections of Common Parts
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Harassment
- Void Property Management
- Customer Engagement
- Repairs and Maintenance
- Factoring

The Estate Management Policy is intended to compliment and support these policies. It is also intended to support the strategic requirements of the Association's key planning documents including;

- The Business Plan
- The Risk Management Strategy

3.0 SCOPE OF POLICY

In general terms, the Estate Management Policy will deal with those aspects of managing the are and the stock that are related to;

- Use of the common parts within the blocks
- Environmental Issues
- Cleanliness of common parts

- Crime and vandalism
- Community Initiatives
- Neighbour relations
- Abandonments

The policy relates to all properties owned and managed by the Association and the responsibilities and obligations of all residents, including tenants, owner occupiers and absent landlords.

4.0 LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Estate Management Policy will meet with all legislative and good practice requirements as well as the regulatory standards laid out in the Scottish Housing Charter, in particular Outcome 6 which requires landlords to work in partnership with other agencies to ensure that **“tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe”**.

5.0 POLICY AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The overarching aim of the policy is to ensure that residents can live in the highest standards possible of housing and living environment and, by doing so, protect the Association’s stock and reputation as a landlord.

To achieve this, the policy’s objectives are to;

- Provide a decent, secure, safe, clean and tidy environment for all residents
- Ensure the housing stock and surrounding areas are managed and maintained to the highest standard
- Define the responsibilities and objectives of residents, the Association and other external agencies and statutory bodies and ensure all parties are aware of these
- Demonstrate the Association’s commitment to the wider community
- Contribute towards a sense of pride and community ownership in residents
- Achieve high standards of customer satisfaction
- Foster good landlord-resident relationships and encourage partnership working and engagement with residents
- Residents are supported to take an active role in the keeping the wider area and environment clean, tidy and safe
- Involve residents in developing initiatives to improve their local neighbourhood and amenities
- Ensure staff maintain a visible presence in the Association’s areas of operation
- Deliver value for money in the delivery of estate management activities

- Develop and maintain good working relationships and partnerships with other agencies and statutory bodies to support the Association's estate management activities
- Encourage constructive and meaningful feedback from residents and ensure it is used to influence and shape the estate management function

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES & OBLIGATIONS

Many of the responsibilities and obligations of tenants and the Association as landlord are set by legislation and reflected in the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

5.1 Charing Cross Housing Association

As the landlord, the Association has two main area of responsibility relating to Estate Management;

1.The physical care, maintenance and upkeep of the properties, common areas and environment. In general, this will require;

- Ensuring common areas are in safe and in good repair and maintained to the highest possible standard
- Shared areas are used in a correct and safe way by residents
- Where the Association has contracts in place for the cleaning of common areas, ensuring these are carried out to the highest possible standard
- Contributing to maintaining the wider appealing appearance and good reputation of the area

2.The management of behaviours by enforcing the terms of the tenancy agreement particularly those clauses that refer to;

- The use of the property and common parts
- Conduct within and around the property

As factor and property manager, the Association's responsibilities and obligations are laid out the Deed of Conditions and primarily relate to the maintenance and upkeep of the common parts.

5.2 Tenants of Charing Cross Housing Association

The responsibilities of tenants are conferred through the Tenancy Agreement and are outlined in the Tenants Handbook. In the main these refer to;

- Use of the property and common parts
- Respect and consideration of others living in and around the property

- Obligation in relation to repairs, maintenance, improvements and alterations

5.3 Owners and Sharing Owners

The legal responsibilities of owners and sharing owners are conferred through the Deed of Conditions and/or the Occupancy Agreement. Although deeds and arrangements for individual closes may differ, in general all owners and sharing owners have responsibilities to;

- Contribute their equal share of costs incurred in the maintenance and upkeep of common parts
- Provide reasonable access to allow essential maintenance works to common parts and/or access to general services such as gas and electricity
- Provide reasonable access to allow essential repairs to maintain the common fabric of the building

Under the terms of some Deeds of Conditions, the Association may also have the power to enforce clauses relating to owners' and sharing owners';

- Use of the property and common areas
- Conduct in and around the property
- Structural alterations to the property

6.0 COMPLIANCE WITH RESPONSIBILITIES & OBLIGATIONS

6.1 Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbour Nuisance

All residents are expected to conduct themselves in manner that does not cause annoyance, nuisance, distress or disturbance to others.

Under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement and some Deeds of Conditions, the tenant and owner is also responsible for the conduct of other members of their household and visitors to their home.

Breaches of this requirement will be dealt with in line with the Association's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

However, it must also be recognised that flatted accommodation is communal living and requires tolerance and respect for the life style and household requirement of their neighbours and those living in the immediate area. In particular, residents are expected to be reasonable in their expectations with regards the use of drying areas and young children playing in backcourts and closes.

6.2 Harassment

Charing Cross Housing Association views harassment on any ground as an extremely serious matter and will immediately implement its harassment Policy and Procedures. Where the level of harassment is severe and/or deemed to be a risk to a person's health and safety, the matter may be reported to the Police.

6.3 Keeping of Pets

Under the terms of the tenancy agreement, tenants must have written permission from the Association to keep pets in the property. Although owners and sharing owners may not be required to apply for the Association's permission to keep a pet, they may, under the terms of the Deed of Conditions, be restricted in the number and type of pet they may keep.

The Association retains the right to designate certain blocks 'pet free' where permission will not be granted under any circumstances. Potential tenants will be advised of this designation at the time of provisional offer if applicable.

Pet owners have a legal duty to ensure their pets are kept under control and are not allowed to cause annoyance and nuisance to others.

The Association will take appropriate action against residents that;

- Do not keep their pets under proper control
- Keep animals banned under the legislation such as the Dangerous Dogs Act
- Do not clean up after their dogs
- Allow their pets to cause damage to the Association's property

This may include;

- Withdrawing permission and requiring the pet to be removed from the property
- Legal action
- Liaising with external agencies such as Environmental Health, Dog Wardens and the SSPCA

6.4 Vandalism and Graffiti

The Association will endeavour to remove offensive, racial, sectarian or obscene graffiti or graffiti that is obviously personal to any one individual as an emergency repair. However, delays may be avoidable to allow the Association, Police or other agencies gather evidence required to pursue action against the perpetrators.

Where acts of vandalism or graffiti can be shown to have been caused by any member of a household living in a property owned or managed by the Association or by a visitor to their home, the costs of repairing damage caused by vandalism or removing graffiti will be charged to the tenant or owner. The incident and the person(s) responsible may also be reported to the Police and have legal action instigated by the Association.

6.5 Cleaning of Common Areas

All residents, regardless of tenure, have a shared responsibility to ensure common parts such as closes, back courts, bin stores etc are kept clean and tidy.

In those closes where the Association has a contract for the cleaning of closes and bin stores, it will take all reasonable steps to ensure the standards expected by the residents and the Association are maintained.

Where there is no contract in place residents will be required to make their own arrangements. If residents cannot or will not maintain the close the Association may issues take steps such as issuing cleaning rotas or, where the common parts property are consistently not kept to an acceptable standard, the Association may carry out the works required and recharge to costs to the residents and/or take appropriate legal action.

6.5 Disposal of Refuse

All residents are expected to take all reasonable steps to ensure that their household rubbish is properly stored and disposed of. Refuse must be adequately bagged and stored in bin stores or other designated areas.

It is the residents' responsibility to arrange for the uplift of bulk refuse.

Bulk items and/or household refuse must not be left on communal stairways, outside doors or in any other common areas where it is likely to cause annoyance or present a hazard to others.

The collection of bulk items and household refuse is the responsibility of Glasgow City Council's Cleansing Departments. Residents must comply with the local arrangements for the collection of refuse, including the arrangement for the uplift of bulk items.

Refuse not stored and/or disposed of appropriately may be removed by the Association and the costs recharged to the responsible

tenant/owner. Residents that consistently fail to dispose of the refuse correctly may referred to Environmental Health for action to be taken under relevant by-laws.

6.6 Hazardous Material

The Association will instruct a suitable contractor to immediately remove any hazardous items such as syringes and needles, dangerous or toxic chemicals or any other dangerous materials identified or reported by residents.

6.7 Vermin and Infestations

The Association will give relevant and appropriate advice and guidance to residents reporting vermin or infestations in common areas.

6.8 Storage of Items

Items such as bicycles, prams and mobility scooters and buggies must not be stored on landings, stairways or access routes in the close as this constitutes a fire hazard and should only be stored in designated areas within the common parts such as the back courts.

6.9 Garden Maintenance

Tenants that have a garden allocated to them as part of their tenancy, are responsible for ensuring it is maintained to an acceptable standard. Tenants unable to maintain their garden due to ill-health or infirmity will be given assistance to identify suitable agencies that may provide suitable and/or voluntary service.

Common landscaped and/or grassed area will be maintained by the Association and the performance of the contractors regularly monitored to ensure the expected standard of service is being provided.

6.10 Security and Management of Void Properties

The Association will effectively and efficiently implement the Association's Void Property Policy in order to minimise the period of time a property is empty.

In general, the Association will not fit secure door and window shutters to empty properties as this detracts from the appearance of the building and wider environment. However, security measures will be put in place where necessary for the protection of neighbours, the property and the public.

6.11 Sensitive Allocations

Although the allocation of vacant properties will always be made in accordance with the Association's policy, it is recognised that many problems in managing a block or area can be avoided by sensitive allocations. The Association will therefore seek to avoid rehousing any applicant that it is felt would exacerbate existing problems in the close or area.

6.12 Door Entry & Security Systems

All residents living in a close with a controlled door entry or similar security system are expected to use the system correctly by keeping the entrance door shut at all times and only allowing access to identified visitors to their own home.

As these systems are there for the safety and protection of residents, the Association will take all reasonable steps to ensure residents comply with their responsibilities and obligations in this regard.

Repairs to systems will, where possible, be carried out within 2 working days of being reported to the Association. However where there are owners within the close, their co-operation in paying their share of the repair costs will be required.

7.0 ESTATE MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 General Approach

The Association will take a proactive approach to the management of the buildings and common parts and will seek to demonstrate its commitment to working with all residents to ensure the properties, shared areas and wider environment is kept to the highest possible standards.

It is recognised that successful estate management relies on partnership working with residents and will therefore seek to foster a sense of community ownership by encouraging residents to actively participate in the management and maintenance of their areas.

Staff will provide a visible presence in the areas the Association manages and will promote the Association as an approachable and supportive partner that will encourage residents to report issues, repairs and problems and to help staff build a sound knowledge and understanding of what is happening in the area.

7.2 Information to Tenants

All new tenants, owners and sharing owners will be provided with a information specific to their tenure, outline their responsibilities and obligations as a resident as well as those of the Association as a landlord and property manager.

7.3 New Tenant Visits

New tenants will be visited within 2 months of their tenancy starting. A key objective of the visit will be to establish a positive landlord/tenant relationship and to promote the Association as an approachable and supportive landlord. The visit will also be an opportunity to outline the household's responsibilities as neighbours and members of the community in a positive manner.

7.4 Tenancy Sustainment Visits

The Association provides a tenancy sustainment service to vulnerable tenants or tenants struggling to maintain their tenancy to an acceptable standard.

Visits will be made to all tenants referred to the service to establish their needs and agree support plans.

7.5 Planned Visits

The Association will endeavour to carry out a home visit to every tenant at least once every two years. The visit will be an opportunity to;

- Update the information the Association holds on the household
- Ensure the property is being used correctly and in line with the tenancy agreement
- Identify any tenancy sustainment issues and give the appropriate assistance and/or advice
- Ensure the tenant understands their responsibilities and obligations
- Develop good landlord/tenant relations

7.6 Inspections

Regular inspections of all internal and external common areas and parts will be carried out to;

- Identify required repairs and maintenance
- Breaches of the Tenancy Agreement and Deed of Conditions
- Record the general appearance and upkeep of the area
- Monitor the performance of contractors

7.7 Use of 'CXHA KNOWS' notices

Where an issue or repair has been identified but can't be rectified immediately, it shall be marked with a 'CXHA KNOWS' notice, with the contact details of the appropriate staff member for enquiries.

7.8 Planned & Cyclical Maintenance Programmes

The Association will have planned and cyclical programmes in place to ensure the effective maintenance of the stock and prevent deterioration of the fabric and appearance of the stock.

7.9 Provision of a Factoring Service

It is recognised that much of the Association's stock is on mixed tenure blocks and, as such, owners have a shared responsibility for the upkeep, repair and maintenance of the buildings and common areas. To facilitate and support owners to comply with these responsibilities the Association provides a Factoring Service to owners in mixed tenure blocks and surrounding closes.

7.8 Multi-agency Approach

It is recognised that there are a number of external agencies that have duties and responsibilities that support or have an impact on the Association's estate management function. It shall therefore seek to build and maintain sound partnerships and good working relationships with relevant agencies and departments, in particular Glasgow City Council, the Police, the Fire Brigade and local Community Councils.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT & PARTICIPATION

The Association recognises the benefits of positive and meaningful engagement with residents to support the delivery of a successful estate management service. It will therefore will use a variety of methods to consult, inform and communicate with residents and encourage and support active participation.

8.1 Joint Inspections

Residents will be encouraged to participate in the inspections of their own building and the surrounding environment in order to;

- Foster partnership work
- Provide better understanding of the limitations and constraints of the Association

- Provide a better understanding of the concerns, needs and priorities of the residents
- Encourage community responsibility and ownership

8.2 Surveys and Questionnaires

Residents will be regularly but appropriately surveyed to provide feedback on their satisfaction with the estate management service and to give information on their priorities and requirements that can be used to shape and improve services.

8.3 Estate Action Meetings

The Association will endeavour to encourage resident participation in the management of the buildings, common parts and wider environment by hosting resident 'Estate Management' meetings. To allow full discussion and advice on specific and general issues, relevant external agencies will be invited to attend including Glasgow City Council's Cleansing Department, contractors, and the Police.

8.4 Initiatives

Where a specific need or issue is identified or is a persistent problem that cannot be addressed through the normal estate management activities, the Association will consider developing initiatives or one-off events to resolve the particular issue or provide a holistic remedy.

9.0 FINANCIAL PLANNING

The Association will regularly review the effectiveness of its estate management activities and identify the service required to maintain the buildings, the common parts and, where appropriate, the surrounding areas to the highest possible standard.

Where there are gaps in the service identified or improvements required, consideration will be given to how best address these in the most cost-effective way. This may include appointing new contractors, providing new services or offering optional services to residents that they pay for.

Estate management contracts will be tendered in line with the Association's procurement Policy and procedures to ensure best value for money is achieved.

10.0 LEGAL ACTION

Where there are persistent or serious breaches of the Tenancy Agreement or the Deed of Conditions and where all reasonable steps have been taken to address the breaches, the Association may consider taking legal action against the perpetrators. This may be;

- Recovery of costs
- Application for Anti-social Behaviour Order
- Actions for specific implement or interdict
- Eviction – only in the most extreme circumstance and where all other options have been exhausted
- Referral to an external agency for action under by-laws or relevant legislation or powers

Legal action will only be instigated with the approval of the Senior Manager.

11.0 APPEALS & COMPLAINTS

Any tenant, owner or sharing owner may appeal a decision made by the Association with regards implementing the Estate Management Policy. Appeals will be investigated and responded to by the appropriate senior member of staff.

Anyone who feels aggrieved by the service or treatment they have received from staff in carrying out their duties or responsibilities in relation to the Estate Management Policy can submit a complaint. All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the Association's Complaints Procedures.

12.0 MONITORING & REPORTING

The Association will monitor the effectiveness of the Estate Management Policy and the outcomes of the service against the policy's objectives and will provide the Management Committee with quarterly reports on indicators and performance in key activities related to the estate management function;

- Void periods
- Inspections carried out against target
- New Tenant and Planned Visits carried out against target
- Complaints relating to the estate management service received
- Legal action instigated
- Number of abandoned properties and failed tenancies
- Satisfaction levels of tenants and factored owners
- Spend against budget
- Anti-social cases and outcomes