

<b>Draft Policy on :</b>	<b>Estate Management</b>
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<b>Compliant with Performance Standard :</b>	<b>GS1.2 Policies and Procedures GS1.3 Commitment to Continuous Improvement AS1.10 Estate Management</b>
<b>Compliant with Tenant Participation Strategy:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Compliant with Equal Opportunities :</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Compliant with Internal Management Plan :</b>	<b>Yes</b>

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<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>Housing Manager, Michael Byrne</b>
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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**

The purpose of this policy is to provide an effective management service that maintains a high quality level of service to our residents.

## **2. Aims**

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.

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.

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.

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 for dealing with estate management issues in order to have a positive effect on customers satisfaction
- To minimise the turnover of stock and reduce any estate management issues
- To ensure that staff are alert to health and safety issues within the general environment
- 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 with our Registered Tenant Organisations.
- To ensure that Housing Officers and Maintenance Officers maintain a high visible presence in our areas, to motivate our residents in taking a responsible role by assisting in any issues that affect their general environment

- To liaise with appropriate agencies such as East Renfrewshire Council, Strathclyde Police and local community groups with the aim of achieving a good 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
- To ensure that garden standards and responsibilities are clearly set and maintained by residents/contractors and that staff remain alert to those who require assistance in maintaining their garden
- To ensure that estate management services are planned, adequately resourced and effectively budgeted for.
- To ensure that all repairs to door entry systems, lighting, removal of graffiti etc. are carried out quickly and efficiently

### **3. Objectives**

The Association's main objectives are:

- 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;
- To promote resident involvement in the management of their homes;
- To encourage responsibility of our residents for their community.

### **4. Estate Management Service**

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 tenants 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 and Harassment Policy and Racial Harassment Policy.

## **5. Estate Management Standards**

### **5.1 Tenancy Matters – Permissions**

The Association will meet the requirements of the tenants Scottish Secure Tenancy and Short Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement, and in all cases permission will be subject to the Association's prior written approval.

Permissions include but are not limited to:

- Permit tenant members to sublet their property which will not be unreasonably withheld ;
- Permit the creation and termination of joint tenancies within the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001;
- Permit the keeping of a pet(s) which will not be unreasonably withheld;
- Permit the assignation of a tenancy which will not be unreasonably withheld;
- Permit the succession of a tenancy within the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001;
- Permit the installation of a television aerial, satellite dish or cable television subject to written approval, which will not be unreasonably withheld;
- Allow alterations to the property.

### **5.2 Physical Environment**

#### **5.2.1 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 ground, whether shared or private, the Association is entitled to decide exactly what work needs to be done to bring the garden 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.

Advice and practical assistance will be offered to residents who are for example, infirm or disabled and who may be eligible for inclusion in East Renfrewshire Council's Garden Care scheme, in this case we will liaise with East Renfrewshire Council on the resident's behalf. Tenant's may also be eligible to be added onto BHA's garden maintenance list.

### **5.2.2 Common Area Landscaping**

The Association will maintain common areas to a clean and tidy standard, including play areas which it owns. This is subject to a service charge

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 9 working days.

Any deliberate damage or vandalism caused to door entry systems will be re-charged, where appropriate, to the resident concerned.

Further information on common area landscaping can be found in the Maintenance Policy.

### **5.2.3 Communal Cleaning**

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 do not deteriorate, and remain in a condition suitable for re-letting.

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.

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 is will decide exactly what work needs to be done to bring the communal areas up to standard. 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.

In some flatted properties that the Association owns, 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.

The health and safety of our tenants is very important to the Association, including anything which causes inconvenience or danger to anyone using the common parts within one of our properties. Therefore no property belonging to a tenant, or anyone staying with, or visiting a tenant including bicycles, motorcycles, prams or toys, will be stored in any of the common parts except in areas set aside for storage.

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

#### **5.2.4 Door Entry Systems**

Some 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 9 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.

#### **5.2.5 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. 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.

### **5.2.6 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 weekly 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 for removal.

### **5.2.7 Dog Fouling**

People who fail to clean up after their dog on public land act against the law and 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 and put their tenancy at risk.

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 residents or members of the public.

### **5.2.8 Drying Areas/Balconies**

Drying facilities are provided where possible. However the Association does not permit 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.

## **6. Performance Monitoring & Reporting**

Performance areas detailed in the table below are monitored and reported quarterly throughout the year to the Housing Management Sub Committee.

Targets set for these areas will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Association. Consideration will also be given to external and internal influences when resetting targets.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Numbers Checked</b>
Gardens	Checked between April September	90%
Communal Cleaning	Weekly	10%
Play Areas	Weekly	100%

Analysis of the above information will be carried out by the Housing Manager. Any changes will be reported, discussed and approved by the Senior Management Team and Housing Management Sub- Committee before implementation.

## **7. Equal Opportunities**

Barrhead Housing Association is committed to providing fair and equal treatment to all our customers.

The Association will not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of civil partnerships, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital status, civil partnerships, family circumstances, employment status or physical ability.

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.

## **8. 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.

## **9. Policy Review**

The Housing Management Sub-Committee 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

## **10. 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.

## **Performance Standard: AS1.10 Estate Management**

### **Self Assessment**

**You may wish to ask the following self-assessment questions about your approach to the management of estates and neighbourhoods:**

- Do we have a pro-active and strategic approach to the management of our properties, estates and neighbourhoods?

***Yes, our strategic approach involves regular discussions with East Renfrewshire Council and other partners regarding the management of our properties, estates and neighbourhoods.***

- Do we work in partnership to improve the physical quality, safety and attractiveness of our estates and neighbourhoods?

***Yes we work with our partner contractors as well as East Renfrewshire Council to improve the physical quality, safety and attractiveness of our community. We also work in partnership with our Registered Tenant Organisations and carry our regular 'walkabouts' in the area with elected members and the Tenant groups.***

- Do we have strong links at an estate and neighbourhood level with other agencies and service providers, such as education, social services, health, police and welfare benefits?

***We hope to establish closer links with education, health and social services in the near future however, we have established a good working relationship with the police and welfare.***

- Do we co-ordinate our services with those of other agencies and service providers operating in our estates and neighbourhoods?

***We co-ordinate a warden service and an Anti-Social Behaviour response team with East Renfrewshire Council to deal effectively and efficiently with issues that arise.***

- Do we have clear policies and procedures for the management of our estates and neighbourhoods which adhere to legislative requirements and established good practice?

***Yes, this policy has been revised in line with legislative requirements and established good practice guidance.***

- Do our policies and procedures cover the full range of estate management services, including:

- Caretaking?
- Common area maintenance?
- Close cleaning?
- Grounds maintenance?
- Litter/waste collection?
- Removal of abandoned cars?
- Removal of graffiti?
- Management of empty properties?
- The management of garages, sheds and other buildings and sites?

***Yes, where appropriate the policy covers the full range of estate management services.***

- Do we assess management issues for each of our estates or neighbourhoods using a range of information sources, including feedback from residents and our partners, regular environmental audits and service monitoring information?

***The introduction of this policy should allow us to assess the management issues using a range of information sources, previously this has not been the case.***

- Do we have local strategies to tackle identified estate management issues, including low demand?

***We are currently developing ways of dealing with areas that have difficult Estate Management issues to prevent creating lower demand areas. We will work closely with ERC and the Police and the local Tenant and Resident Organisations to solve the problems.***

- Do we devolve budgets and decision-making to a local level where appropriate?

***We do not devolve budgets and decision-making to a local level, we do however consult on a regular basis with our RTO's.***

- Do we monitor and report the impact of our services on our estates and neighbourhoods?

***To date we have only monitored some of the impact of our services on our estates, the implementation of this policy will allow for more monitoring and reporting of the impact of our services.***

**You may wish to ask the following self-assessment questions about resident focus of your management of estates and neighbourhoods:**

- Do we have clear structures for promoting, encouraging and supporting the participation of all residents, including harder to reach groups, in the management of their estates and neighbourhoods?

***We have a customer participation policy which provides a structure for promoting, encouraging and supporting the participation of all residents in the management of their estates and neighbourhoods.***

- Do we know resident satisfaction levels with our estates and neighbourhoods?

***A detailed resident satisfaction survey was carried out in 2004 and collated the information regarding satisfaction levels in our estates and neighbourhoods. As a result of the survey an Action Plan was put in place to further develop satisfaction levels in the area.***

- Do we have clear service standards and targets for the management of our estates and neighbourhoods?

***Through the development of this policy, clear service standards and targets will be developed.***

- Do we publicise these standards, so that residents know what to expect from our services?

***These standards will be publicised in our newsletters and Annual Report.***

- Do we consult residents on the development and review of our estate management service standards?

***Our Resident Tenant Organisations are involved in the development of the policy and will be involved in developing the service standards.***

- Do our tenancy agreements, handbooks and general information provision clearly set out tenant and resident responsibilities relating to estate management?

***Our tenancy agreement clearly sets out tenant and resident responsibilities, we are currently reviewing our tenants and owners handbook as well as the quality of information we give to our residents.***