

Cheshire West and Chester Council **Housing Management**

Neighbourhood Management Policy

1 MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Approval Date	28 July 2022
Next Review Date	27 July 2024
Responsible Service Area	Strategic Housing and Commissioning
Responsible Director	Gemma Davies, Director Economy, Housing & Policy

Aim of Policy

This policy applies to all housing management services delivered on behalf of Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) Council.

This policy sets out the aims and principles through which ForHousing manages the neighbourhoods on behalf of CW&C.

The overarching aim of this policy is to ensure that the neighbourhoods ForHousing manage are clean, safe, attractive and well managed working in partnership with tenants, leaseholder, partners and agencies.

We strive to create vibrant communities through providing excellent services to ensure that the neighbourhoods ForHousing manage are places where current and future tenants want to live.

Policy

ForHousing is passionate about ensuring that the neighbourhoods we manage are places where people feel safe, choose to live and want to visit. We believe that everyone should be able to live in a well maintained, safe and clean environment which they can be proud of. The way in which we manage neighbourhoods directly affects the quality of life and environment enjoyed by tenants.

ForHousing recognises that a fundamental element to the successful management of neighbourhoods is the compliance against statutory and regulatory standards. Whilst not specifically referenced within this policy, the requirements of the organisation to meet these standards are contained within the respective policies.

We will work with all relevant partners, stakeholders and organisations to ensure that the homes we manage on behalf of CW&C and the neighbourhoods in which we work, are managed and maintained to the highest standard.

We will have clear procedures which set out how we will manage the neighbourhoods in which we work and the standard to which these will be maintained. These will be developed and regularly reviewed with tenants.

Our approach to Neighbourhood Management includes but is not limited to;

Grounds Maintenance

The Grounds Maintenance service is provided directly by CW&C. There is a Service Level Agreement in place which ensures that borders and shrub areas are looked after according to the plant species and grassed areas are cut as appropriate during the different seasons.

Where we identify that a tree is dead, diseased, dying or dangerous, we will work with CW&C to carry out work to ensure that it poses no risk to the general public or property. We aim to maintain a healthy tree population so we will not carry out work for aesthetic or light restriction reasons only. On occasions we may have to remove an established tree, but we will not do this unnecessarily.

We may inspect and undertake works to trees in tenant's gardens where they pose a possible health and safety risk or are damaging the property. Generally, the maintenance of trees in tenants' gardens is the responsibility of the tenant and this is specified in the tenancy agreement.

Cleaning of communal areas in blocks of flats

The cleaning of the communal areas in blocks is the responsibility of the tenant and leaseholder under the tenancy agreement/leasehold agreement. We will work with tenants to ensure the communal areas of blocks are clean and safe. We also expect tenants, leaseholders and other customers to play their part in keeping their neighbourhoods clean by disposing of unwanted items responsibly and cleaning up after their pet. Cleaning can be described as keeping internal and external communal areas swept, mopped and free from litter and graffiti. Where blocks and schemes have communal facilities such as kitchen, laundry rooms and lounges we will ensure that they are well maintained.

Environmental crime, including fly tipping

We take a robust approach to environmental crime, and we will work in partnership with CW&C enforcement agencies, which could include legal action against those committing such crimes on land owned by CW&C, for example fly tipping. We take such issues seriously and will ensure that these are dealt with quickly.

We will investigate all instances of fly tipping, and in the event that we establish the identity of tenant or person responsible, a request to remove the items within a reasonable timescale will be given. In the event that the request is not adhered to, we will arrange for the removal of the items and will recharge those concerned for the whole cost of this service.

Neighbourhood and Block Inspections

All ForHousing employees have a duty in the course of their day to day work to note any repairs or maintenance requirements identified both within a communal area or a neighbourhood, particularly those which pose a threat to health and safety and report these promptly.

A programme of robust neighbourhood and block inspections will be undertaken to ensure that they are safe, clean and well maintained.

We also request tenants and leaseholders to report any safety issues within their block. This will help ForHousing take appropriate action in a timely manner.

Abandoned Vehicles

All vehicles on communal or other land owned by CW&C but managed by ForHousing, aside from individual tenancies must be taxed and in a road worthy condition or registered with the DVLA as off road through the Statutory Off Road Notice (SORN). ForHousing consider any vehicle which does not meet these requirements to be causing a nuisance, and as such action will be taken to remove in accordance with ForHousing procedures.

Graffiti removal

Graffiti impacts negatively on the aesthetic appeal and appearance of a neighbourhood. Graffiti reported or identified will be removed in line with our Service Standards, along with the reporting of criminal damage to the police where applicable.

Garden condition

Untidy and overgrown gardens can negatively impact upon the kerbside appeal of neighbourhoods and can often be an indicator to poor property condition. Following identification of a tenants garden being overgrown, support will be provided however should the tenant fail to rectify the issue, Breach of Tenancy procedure will be followed.

Partnerships

We are aware that we manage homes in neighbourhoods where there is a mix of social housing and private owners. We will work closely with Local Authorities and other land owners to ensure that identified issues are addressed quickly and appropriately. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The maintenance and improvement of footpaths and roads
- The maintenance of lighting
- The maintenance of culverts

In addition to the work we undertake, we will also work collaboratively with other organisations, agencies and stakeholders, to ensure that services delivered outside of ForHousing's remit positively contribute to maintaining neighbourhoods that are clean, safe and attractive.

How the Policy will be delivered

The delivery of this policy and associated procedures will be the responsibility of ForHousing. This Policy will be available to all employees through the intranet and regular training will be provided to relevant employees on all policies and procedures.

If staff become aware that there are problems with effective operation of the policy or the associated procedures, they should report this to the policy owner. This feedback will be incorporated into the policy / procedural review process.

Related Documents

- CW&C Responsive Repairs Policy, inc Right to Repair
- CW&C ASB Policy
- Abandoned and untaxed vehicle procedure
- Neighbourhood and Block procedure

Equality Analysis

Date of approved EA	
Results of EA / Actions taken forward to mitigate any potential negative impacts	

Consultation & Business Intelligence

The Policy was reviewed in consultation with tenants and staff representing Cheshire West and Chester Council and ForHousing.

Monitoring Arrangements

Delivery of the Neighbourhood Management services will be measured using existing methods including continued monitoring of:

- Satisfaction with services
- Redress levels and satisfaction with resolution
- Performance and Service Standard levels
- Compliance with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard

If staff become aware that there are problems with effective operation of the Policy or the associated procedures, they should report this to the Policy Owner. This feedback will be incorporated into the policy / procedural review process.

Control Data & Approval History

Policy owner:	CW&C: Alison Amesbury, Strategic Housing & Commissioning Senior Manager
Next review date:	27 July 2024

Issue	Approved by	Date
Approval V1	Cabinet Member for Housing	28 July 2022

Document Revision History

Date amended	Version number	Key changes
	1	Original version
	1.2	Revised version following tenant feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aim of Policy updated to reflect the partnership between tenants, leaseholders and partners.• Cleaning heading revised to 'Cleaning of Communal Areas' and information on clearing up after a pet.• Under Garden condition information added that support will be provided.