

**Cheshire West and Chester Council**  
**Housing Management**

**Neighbourhood Management Policy**

**1 MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**

Approval Date – V2	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024
Next Review Date	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2027
Responsible Service Area	Strategic Housing and Commissioning
Responsible Director	Gemma Davies, Director of Economy and Housing

### 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 the following:

### **Grounds Maintenance**

The Grounds Maintenance service is provided directly by CW&C. There is a Service Level Agreement in place (appendix 1) 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.

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.

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 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. Tenants, leaseholders, and other customers are to play their part in keeping their neighbourhoods clean by disposing of unwanted items responsibly and cleaning up after their pet. Cleaning is defined as keeping internal and external communal areas swept, mopped and free from litter and graffiti.

### **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. Any safety issues identified following inspections will be reported through our Housing Management system and be actioned in line with our Responsive Repairs policy.

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.

### **High Rise Blocks – Joseph Groome Towers**

These three blocks fall under the Building Safety Act and have their own inspection regime which lies outside of this policy and refers to Building Safety policy.

### **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.

Offensive Graffiti following a report will be removed within 3 days.  
All other Graffiti following a report will be removed within 10 days.

### **Garden condition**

For tenants with responsibility for their own gardens must ensure that they are kept tidy and not overgrown as this can negatively impact upon the kerbside appeal of neighbourhoods and can often be an indicator to poor property condition. Following identification of a tenant's garden being overgrown, support (including sign posting) 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 landowners 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.

We will measure the effectiveness of the delivery of this policy through the Together with Tenants Charters via the tenant satisfaction measures:

- TP10: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.
- TP11: Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods.

## Related Documents

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

## Inclusive Decision-Making Framework (IDMF) Analysis

Date of approved IDMF analysis	29/02/2024
Actions taken forward to mitigate any potential negative impact	N/A

## Equality Analysis (Tenants)

Results of EA / Actions taken forward to mitigate any potential negative impacts	<p>Policy document can be provided in alternative formats.</p> <p>ForHousing staff to undertake equality and diversity training on an ongoing basis to support the delivery of all policies.</p>
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## Data Protection Impact Assessment

### Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

Under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, you are required to carry out a DPIA when developing a new Policy or Procedure that will have a widespread or serious impact on data held on individuals. Careful consideration should be given as to whether the policy or process will have an impact on any processing of personal information that is large scale, involves profiling or monitoring, decides on access to services or opportunities, or involves sensitive data or vulnerable individuals. Information and support regarding this can be obtained from the Data Protection Officer (DPO).

Has a DPIA been completed?	Yes
If a DPIA has been completed, was the DPO consulted?	Yes
If a DPIA has been completed, were any risks identified?	No
If risks were identified as part of the DPIA process, have mitigation actions been identified?	N/A

## Consultation & Business Intelligence

The Policy was created in consultation with CW&C tenants and representatives of CW&C 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: Lucy Heath, Head of Housing	
Next review date:	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2027	
Issue	Approved by	Date
Approval V1	Cabinet Member for Housing	28 July 2022
Version 2.1	CW&C, Cabinet Member of Homes, Planning and Safer Communities	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024

## Document Revision History

Date	Version number	Key changes
	1	Original version
	1.2	<p>Revised version following tenant feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim of Policy updated to reflect the partnership between tenants, leaseholders and partners.</li> <li>• Cleaning heading revised to 'Cleaning of Communal Areas' and information on clearing up after a pet.</li> <li>• Under Garden condition information added that support will be provided.</li> </ul>
May 2024	1.2	No changes
28 June 2024	V2	<p>Revised version following tenant feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about the cleaning of communal areas and maintenance of trees made clearer.</li> <li>• Information about block inspections for high/low rise flats.</li> <li>• Included timeframe for removal of graffiti and fly tipping.</li> <li>• Information about support provided for upkeep of gardens.</li> <li>• Included within related documents the Grounds Maintenance Service Standard.</li> <li>• Information about Tenant Together Charter and the Regulator of Social Housing tenant satisfaction measures.</li> <li>• Made clear that this policy document can be provided in alternative formats.</li> <li>• Informed about the ongoing equality and diversity training being provided to staff in the delivery of this policy.</li> </ul>