

Neighbourhood Management Policy

Linked strategies	Live proud
Version	3.0
Date approved by	EMT (March 2023)
Policy level	2
Agreed by Union	N/A
Date effective	March 2023
Date of next review	March 2026
Policy Owner	Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Greatwell Homes is committed to shape places, people are proud to call home. We want to create places that are safe, clean, protect open spaces and enhance the natural environment.
- 1.2 This policy will set out how we will manage our responsibilities to the common parts of the neighbourhoods we manage and how we will work with partner agencies to help ensure our neighbourhoods are places where customers and communities can thrive.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy will apply to all neighbourhoods where we own or manage properties.
- 2.2 This policy is particularly relevant to staff whose roles involve management and maintenance of our neighbourhoods, including our estate service operatives, tree surgeons, and neighbourhood housing team.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 For the purposes of this policy, our definition of neighbourhood management includes the following.
 - Untidy Gardens
 - Tree Management
 - Abandoned Cars
 - Estate Inspections
 - Communal Cleaning
 - Fly Tipping & Graffiti
 - Management of Green Spaces
 - Grounds Maintenance
- 3.2 As part of our policy development schedule, we will include our approach to dealing with non-statutory noise (as identified by the Housing Ombudsman) in 23/24

4 Managing Our Neighbourhoods

- 4.1 Untidy Gardens

4.1.1 Where a customer's front or back garden is in a poor condition, we will work with that customer to agree a timescale for action. We will normally ask customers to rectify the issue(s) within 2 weeks but recognise that this may not be possible in some cases due to external factors (such as the weather) and will take this into account.

4.1.2 We will assess the condition of a garden as set out in the relevant section of the customer's tenancy agreement. The current tenancy agreement states.

'You must keep your garden, balcony and any area for which you are responsible, in a clean and tidy condition and free of rubbish including dis-used items. You must keep grassed areas cut regularly during the growing season and trim hedges neatly (including all and any hedges that form a boundary to your property).'

4.1.2 We will signpost customers who are unable to care for their own garden to agencies that may be able to help or provide an affordable payment plan for work that we carry out in the customer's behalf.

4.1.3 Where a customer fails to maintain their garden as requested, we may seek enforcement action through the courts.

4.2 Tree Management

4.2.1 We will undertake a survey of all the trees on communal land we own at least every 5 years to assess their condition, damage, and any potential risks to people or property. Our assessment will be based upon the type of tree, and its location.

4.2.2 We commit to timely action to repair damaged, overgrown, and potentially dangerous trees on our land in line with our common law responsibilities, as the landowner. We will assess standard tree repairs within 5 working days and endeavour to complete all follow-on works within 10 days.

4.2.3 Prior to undertaking tree works, we will check for existing tree preservation orders (TPO's) and where they exist, we will seek permission from the relevant local authority before completing work.

4.2.4 We define an emergency tree repair as one that is 'likely to cause injury or damage if not attended to' or 'work required following a storm or other act of nature'.

4.2.5 We will attend all emergency tree repairs within 2 working days and make safe. We will endeavour to complete all follow-on works within 5 working days.

4.2.6 Where tree issues are reported to us that are not on land owned by us, we will contact the landowner to make them aware and follow up to ensure that action necessary is undertaken.

4.3 Abandoned Cars

4.3.1 We will challenge customers who abandon cars on Greatwell Homes' Land. We will do this by issuing written warnings, and / or re-charging for removal.

4.3.2 Where abandoned cars are reported to us that are not on our land, we will notify the landowner and liaise with the relevant Local Authority and DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency) to resolve the issue.

4.4 Estate Inspections

4.4.1 We will agree a set of standards for our estates with customers to assess the quality of our neighbourhoods

4.4.2 We will carry out regular estate inspections, and we will invite partners (such as Ward Councillors, Police and colleagues from the Local Authority) to at least one inspection a year.

4.4.3 At each inspection we will evaluate our estates in line with our agreed standards and check for the following

- Untidy gardens
- Communal repairs
- Grounds maintenance issues
- Tree issues
- Parking issues
- Health and safety issues (such as damaged brick work and trip hazards).

4.4.4 Where estates do not meet our agreed standards, we will employ additional resources to ensure that standards are met (subject to financial capacity).

4.4.5 We will communicate performance and progress in our estates with customers through our customer newsletter, website, and other means.

4.5 Communal Cleaning

- 4.5.1 We will provide a cleaning service to our independent living, and general needs blocks and will ensure floors, il windows and communal areas remain clean and tidy.
- 4.5.2 We will publish our service standards relating to cleaning and grounds maintenance in each of or blocks and independent living schemes.
- 4.5.3 The costs of the cleaning service will be attributed to customers in line with our service charge policy.
- 4.5.4 Should customers request changes to their cleaning services (such as additional services) we will consult with customers, in line with our service charges policy.

4.6 Fly Tipping & Graffiti

- 4.6.1 We will clear fly tips on (our land) within 5 working days of it being reported to us. We will also work with the relevant Local Authority to tackle fly tipping on their land in the local neighbourhood.
- 4.6.2 We will remove offensive graffiti on our land or buildings within 1 working day, and we will remove general graffiti from our land and buildings within 5 working days
- 4.6.3 We recognise that the term 'offensive' may have different interpretations for different customers, so we will ask those who report graffiti to us to determine if they believe it to be offensive or not and prioritise it accordingly.

4.7 Management of Green Spaces

- 4.7.1 We will work with customers to ensure green spaces in their neighbourhood are environmentally sustainable.
- 4.7.2 We will support customers who wish to look after or adopt a green space in their neighbourhood by providing advice on wildlife, planning requirements and help to prepare sites for them to adopt.
- 4.7.3 Greatwell Homes will not provide any services (outside of any contractual obligations) to any green space that has been adopted by a customer (or group of customers).
- 4.7.4 Should any green space that has been adopted by a customer (or group of customers) fall into an unsatisfactory condition, we will endeavour to discuss our concerns with the customer(s) and agree a timescale for improvement.

4.7.5 If this timescale is not adhered to, then we reserve the right to bring the area up to an acceptable standard and bring back under Greatwell Homes' management without further notice.

4.8 Communal Grounds Maintenance

4.8.1 We will maintain communal areas (including grassed areas, drying areas, bin stores, garage areas and communal parking bays) in line with our published grounds maintenance standards.

4.8.2 Where the management of communal grounds is attributed to either a third party or service chargeable cost, we will apportion these to customers in line with our service charge policy.

5 Implications for customers and staff (data protection info sharing and confidentiality)

5.1 A PIA has been completed and is available on request.

5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and a copy is available upon request.

6 Performance Management

6.1 We will make use of the following operational performance indicators and management information to monitor and report on the effectiveness of the service.

- % Emergency tree works completed in target
- % Standard tree works completed in target
- % Fly tips cleared within target
- % Graffiti removed within target
- % Offensive graffiti removed within target
- % Satisfied with Cleaning Service
- % Satisfied with Estate Management Service

7 Responsibility and Decision Making

7.1 The table below illustrates the structure for responsibility and decision making in relation to this policy.

Person Responsible	Scope
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<p>Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall responsibility for ensuring that all activities are undertaken, and all performance measurements are met
<p>Estate Services Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the day-to-day application and adherence to this policy in relation to the following. • Tree Management • Abandoned Cars • Communal Cleaning • Fly Tipping & Graffiti • Management of Green Spaces • Responsible for delivery of relevant operational performance indicators linked to this policy.
<p>Housing and Income Services Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the day-to-day application and adherence to this policy in relation to the following. • Untidy Gardens • Estate Inspections • Responsible for delivery of relevant operational performance indicators linked to this policy.
<p>Neighbourhood Housing Officers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for arranging and delivering estate inspections (and inviting relevant partners) • Responsible for identifying issues in communal areas that need attention (such as repairs, trip hazards and so forth)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for ensuring the neighbourhoods and estates in their area meet the agreed standards (set by customers) • Responsible for resolving issues relating to untidy gardens, abandoned cars and fly tipping, using enforcement action where necessary
Estate Operatives and Cleaners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the upkeep and presentation of our estates and neighbourhoods to meet the standards set by customers. • Responsible for resolving issues relating to graffiti, fly tipping (providing evidence to the housing team to assist with enforcement as necessary)

8 Review

8.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years or in line with changes in relevant legislation, whichever is the sooner, updates or recommendations for changes will be presented to the EMT for approval.

Associated Policies	Associated Procedures
	Untidy Garden Procedure
	Estate Inspection Procedure



Service Charge Policy	Service Charge Procedure
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