



TOLLCROSS
housing association

Estate Management Policy

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| Prepared By | Fiona Mills, Housing Manager |
| Policy Created | Fiona Mills, Housing Manager |
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| Reviewed By | Fiona Mills, Housing Manager |

CORPORATE FIT

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| Internal Management Plan | ✓ |
| Risk Register | ✓ |
| Business Plan | ✓ |
| Regulatory Standards | ✓ |
| Equalities Strategy | ✓ |
| Legislation | ✓ |

On request, the Association can provide translations of all our documents, policies and procedures in various languages and other formats such as computer disc, tape, large print, Braille etc. and these can be obtained by contacting the Association's offices.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tollcross Housing Association is committed to providing good quality affordable housing and to manage the properties owned and factored by the Association to the highest possible standard within the existing financial constraints.

1.2 Estate Management is a general term used to define Tenancy Management and Environmental Management.

Tenancy Management aims to encourage and support a tenant to keep the terms of their Tenancy Agreement. Where appropriate and necessary it will involve taking action to enforce compliance.

Environmental Management aims to create a well maintained neighbourhood in which tenants and other customers feel safe.

Estate Management therefore covers a diverse range of issues such as:

- Providing advice and information on tenancy matters
- Inspecting the condition of common areas
- Enforcing tenancy conditions;
- Monitoring empty and tenanted properties;
- Providing advice and assistance to tenants and residents on services that enhance the local community,
- Supporting initiatives to reduce crime
- Environmental maintenance and improvements;
- Maintenance of communal areas;
- Co-operation with other agencies delivering services in the community

1.3 Estate Management is linked to, but separate from, the management of Anti-Social Behaviour. The Association's Anti Social Behaviour Policy sets out how we deal with Anti-Social Behaviour. In some instances some Estate Management issues will evolve and escalate and will be dealt with under the guidelines of the Anti Social Behaviour Policy.

2. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

2.1 Through the Scottish Social Housing Charter the Scottish Housing Regulator has identified a number of key indicators which will measure landlord performance in relation to Estate Management. They are:

Outcome 6 which refers to Estate management, Anti-social behaviour, Neighbour nuisance and Tenancy disputes and requires that social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe

Outcome 11 which refers to Tenancy sustainment and states that “Social Landlords must ensure that tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

Outcome 13 which relates to Value for money and requires that landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

2.2 The Association is also required to comply with the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement (Scottish Secure Tenancy 5.4) outlined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 to:

- Carry out a reasonably diligent inspection of the common parts before the tenancy begins. We will take reasonable steps to remove any danger we find before you move into your house. We will repair any defect we find that will significantly affect your use of the common parts, or the house, within a reasonable period
- Keep Boundary walls and fences (excluding dividing fences between gardens) in repair:
- Keep in good order any areas of common ground associated with your house such as common drying areas. You must not remove, destroy or chop down any bushes, hedges or trees in these areas without our written permission unless you planted them. The Association will recover the costs of maintaining any areas of common ground from rental income.

In terms of keeping and the control of pets, our Scottish Secure Tenancy requires that tenants must:

- Be responsible for the behaviour of any pets owned by you or anyone living with you,
- take all reasonable steps to supervise and keep such pets under control and shall not permit it to be unsupervised at any time within the common parts of the property
- take all reasonable steps to prevent such pets causing nuisance annoyance or danger to your neighbours. This includes fouling or noise or smell from your domestic pet.
- take reasonable care to see that such pets do not foul or cause damage to the house, your neighbour's property, anything belonging to us or anything we are responsible for, such as the common parts,
- be responsible for cleaning up any faeces from any pet you are responsible for.
- Keep no livestock within the property or common parts

The definition of pets in terms of the legislation is dogs, cats, birds, reptiles and rodents.

We will also require all tenants to obtain permission in writing and in advance before keeping any domestic pet within the property or surrounding areas. We will normally only grant permission for one domestic pet per property.

Some reasons for refusing permission could be:

- If keeping the pet would be likely to cause a nuisance, annoyance or danger to your neighbours
- If we have previously withheld or withdrawn our permission that you may keep a pet
- If keeping your pet is prohibited by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, or by any other law,
- We will withdraw our permission to keep any domestic pet if it is causing a nuisance or annoyance or danger to your neighbours or if it fouls or causes damage to the house or common parts.

2.3 We will implement the policy by keeping a register of all pets kept by Association tenants, requesting that new tenants provide details of their pets and reminding existing tenants of the requirement to request

permission for pets by regular newsletter articles and in day-to-day interactions with association staff.

The decision to allow a tenant to keep more than one pet will be in exceptional circumstances only and made by the Housing Manager/Housing Director.

- 2.4 Tenants are required, through their responsibilities under the Scottish Secure Tenancy to ensure the following sections are adhered to:

Scottish Secure Tenancy (Section 2.2)

You (the tenant), those living with you, and your visitors must take reasonable care to prevent damage to the common parts

Scottish Secure Tenancy (section 2.8)

Tenants must take their turn, with all other tenants and owner-occupiers sharing the common parts, in keeping them clean and tidy. If you share a common stair, you must also take your turn in regularly cleaning, washing and keeping tidy the common stair, its windows, and banisters. If you and the others cannot agree on the arrangements for doing this or you fail to do the work, we are entitled to decide exactly what you should do and when. Before making our decision, we will consult with you and the others. Our decision will be binding on you. If you do not do the work contained in this paragraph, we may do it ourselves and charge you for it. This is in addition to any other legal remedies open to us.

We will implement this by responding to individual resident's complaints and by carrying out regular inspections of the common areas.

We will ensure the majority of our closes are kept to a reasonable standard of cleanliness by providing a stair cleaning service. We will aim to keep the cost of this service to tenants to a minimum whilst ensuring that the contractor meets our standards.

Where the majority of tenants in a close advise the Association that they do not require a stair cleaning service, and commit to cleaning their stairs on a rota basis, then the service may be removed.

Scottish Secure Tenancy (Section 2.9)

Tenants must comply with any local arrangements for the use and sharing of the common parts including drying greens and drying areas. You must comply with any local rotas for the use and sharing of the common parts. In cases of dispute between the users of the common parts, we are entitled to decide the arrangements and rotas for the use of, and the sharing of, the common parts. Before making our decision, we will consult with you. Our decision will be binding on you.

Scottish Secure Tenancy (section 2.11)

I/We will keep in good order any areas of common ground associated with my/your house such as common drying areas. You must not remove, destroy or chop down any bushes, hedges or trees in these areas without our written permission unless you planted them. The costs of maintaining areas of common ground will be met from the Association's Rental Income.

Scottish Secure Tenancy (section 2.12)

No property belonging to you or anyone residing with you, including bicycles, motorcycles or prams, should be stored in any of the common parts except in areas set aside for storage. You must not do anything that causes inconvenience or danger to anyone using the common parts.

We will regularly inspect common areas and if any issues are identified we will action immediately in accordance with the Estate Management Procedure.

Scottish Secure Tenancy (section 2.13)

Tenants must put all your household rubbish for collection in the bin store or other proper place allocated for it. You must take reasonable care to see that your rubbish is properly bagged. You must comply with arrangements that are made for the collection of refuse that are advised to you by the local authority or by us. Rubbish containers should be returned to their normal storage places as soon as possible after the rubbish has been collected. You must comply with the local arrangements for the disposal of large items (such as large electrical items).

Housing Officers/Housing Assistants will liaise and meet on site with City Council Cleansing staff if the refuse collection service is having a detrimental impact on the common areas.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 We recognise that Estate Management is a vital part of our housing management role as a landlord and a particularly important service for all our residents, therefore The Key aims and objectives of this policy are:
- To provide a comprehensive and responsive customer service to the Association's tenants, sharing and factored owners
 - To develop mutually beneficial good landlord/tenant/resident relationships

- Ensure the housing stock and surrounding environment is managed and maintained to a standard which reduces the duration and level of void properties
- To have in place a robust asset management and implementation strategy to ensure the long term maintenance of the Association's properties and ensure compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, EESH and any subsequent Government regulatory requirements.
- To ensure the Association satisfies all health, safety and environmental requirements and legislation
- To provide the Association's customers with advice and information services as a means of supporting sustainable tenancies

We recognise that Estate Management is not solely about looking after buildings and the physical environment. It is also providing or arranging necessary advice and support to tenants and residents. It also involves working with other agencies to achieve decent living and **environmental** conditions.

4.0 OUR ESTATE MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVING OUR KEY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 Housing Stock

A planned maintenance programme will be put in place and regular works surveys carried out by the Maintenance Officers to ensure its effective implementation. In the course of their regular duties all members of our housing and maintenance staff will look for, and report on, any signs of deterioration to our properties.

4.2 Making Tenants Aware of Their Responsibilities

We will explain the Conditions of Tenancy before the tenant signs a tenancy agreement. We will give the tenant a copy of our Tenant's Handbook that explains the conditions of tenancy in a simple and straightforward manner.

Housing Staff will attempt to carry out New Tenancy visits within six weeks of the beginning of a new tenancy. Follow up visits will be programmed as necessary following that initial visit, where it is apparent that the tenant may require support to keep to the conditions of tenancy. We will prioritise New Tenancy Visits where tenants are

considered to present a high risk of an unsustainable tenancy. Indicators of high risk may include

- Under 25 years old
- First Tenancy
- Receiving support or vulnerable
- Previously homeless
- History of rent arrears in former tenancy
- History of anti-social behaviour in a former tenancy

We will liaise with external support agencies where any tenant requires support to sustain their tenancy, and the support is of a type or extent that cannot be provided by our in house Tenancy Sustainment Team. The Association carries out a visit each two years to each tenancy. This will be an opportunity to identify and address Estate Management issues with tenants.

4.3 Maintaining Common Areas to a High Standard

We will set out high standards in our specifications for the maintenance of common areas. Specifications will be set out and periodically reviewed for the following contracts to ensure a satisfactory standard is met:

- Landscape Maintenance
- Close Cleaning

We will also:

- Carry out regular inspections to check on both condition and cleanliness;
- Maintain contact with tenants and residents to identify specific problem areas;
- Inform concerned tenants and residents in writing of action which we propose to take to remedy any such problems identified;
- Monitor on a continuing basis to ensure that required standards are achieved and maintained;
- Arrange for repairs to be carried out promptly once the need has been identified or reported;
- Arrange for graffiti removal to be carried out promptly once the need has been identified or reported; we will aim to remove offensive graffiti within 24 hours of it being reported.
- Periodically review resident satisfaction with stair cleaning and Landscape maintenance

4.4 We will proactively look for problems

Housing staff will regularly monitor matters affecting the general environmental conditions for our tenants and residents and, where necessary, we shall liaise with other agencies to ensure that action is taken to secure and maintain a desirable level of environmental amenity.

This will cover such matters as litter, street cleaning, cleansing services, lighting, abandoned cars, parking of caravans and other large vehicles/craft, conditions of footpaths, etc. and notify or liaise with other agencies that may be able to assist in resolving any issues.

Other agencies include:

Police

It will be appropriate to contact the police where there is reason to believe that a tenant or household member is involved in some form of illegal activity.

Social Work

The Social Work Department has a major role to play in a number of situations which might also include a breach of tenancy. Social Work may be able to provide critical support to an individual in order to enable a person to sustain their tenancy.

Health Board

Community Health workers may be able to provide information on specific health problems being faced by families which may impact on their ability to sustain their tenancy.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Department may be able to assist or support the Association in various matters, such examples being pest control, excessive noise etc. and has powers to take action.

Voluntary Organisations

There are a wide range of voluntary organisations working within the Association's area of operation and many offer services which could be relevant to difficulties which may come to the attention of the Association and assist with Estate Management issues.

Glasgow Community and safety Services

We will work in partnership with GCSS in terms of all Estate Management issues such as excessive noise, dog fouling and any other issues that have a detrimental impact on the Association's properties.

We will have regular estate management walkabouts carried out by the Housing Officers/Housing Assistants which may sometimes involve members of the PIL and PIN committee and/or committee members and residents of the area.

As part of our objective of encouraging good tenant/landlord relationships we will encourage tenants and residents to take an active interest and participate in issues that affect the community and the work of the Association.

We will aim to achieve this through our Customer Feedback and Complaints Procedure and our PIL and PIN scrutiny panel in compliance the Scottish Housing Charter. In particular, we will

- Have periodical communication with individual tenants through personal letters, newsletters, home visits and information sheets;
- Hold meetings with any organised tenant and resident groups;
- The involvement of tenants and residents at a local level to improve their community through public consultation over environmental improvements, artworks etc.

4.5 Cleaning Common Stairways

The Association will offer a close stair cleaning service to residents and promote take-up. Where residents do not clean the stairs to a satisfactory standard, after due notice and opportunity to improve, the Association will impose the stair cleaning service. For owners, the costs will be recovered through an addition to the management charge. Tenants will have the opportunity to improve the close stair cleaning service where they are willing to meet any increased costs associated with enhancements in specification

The Association will inspect common stairs and closes on a regular and recorded basis. The frequency of such inspections will be assessed by the Association on the basis on the condition of stairs and closes. Inspections will be carried mainly on a weekly basis.

The condition of common stairs will be assessed with relation to:

Presence of any material in the close or stair that would present a fire hazard or obstruction to clear exit route in the event of a fire;

- Presence of any refuse or dumping in the stair or close;
- Presence of graffiti or evidence of vandalism in the stair;
- Presence of any tripping hazard in the stair and close and the physical condition of the stair and close floor, walls and ceilings;
- Cleanliness of the stair and close, walls and windows. These inspections will usually be done directly after the stair cleaners have cleaned the close.

Where items are found within the stair that are considered to be a fire hazard or obstruction, the Association will try to identify the person(s) responsible and require that the item be removed as soon as possible. The Association will remove the items if the owner cannot be identified or if the owner does not remove the items as required within the period of notice.

4.6 Vermin and Pest Control in Common Areas

Where evidence of vermin or pests occurs, the Association will ensure a prompt response by qualified operatives to deal with the problem in accordance with environmental health guidelines and our repairs and maintenance procedures.

4.7 Unoccupied properties

The Association may secure a void property while it is unoccupied, this may include the use of shutters on any ground floor property, if required. At regular estate management visits, Housing Officers/Housing Assistants will externally inspect empty properties for signs of forced entry or unauthorised occupation, and will advise Maintenance staff if it appears that an empty property is not secure.

4.8 Abandoned property

The Association will take action to promptly investigate and where necessary, recover possession of an abandoned property in accordance with the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and any other relevant legislation which is set out in the Association's abandonment procedures.

4.9 Owner Occupiers and other residents

We will seek the involvement and support of owner-occupiers and other residents in our efforts to achieve our estate management objectives.

4.10 Satellite Dishes

The Association has provided a communal satellite TV system in some areas of our housing stock e.g. tenemental stock and new build. Tenants and residents and proprietors of commercial premises will not be permitted to erect individual dishes where the communal system covers their property. Residents and commercial proprietors who have dishes erected without permission will be requested to remove them. Where they are not removed after due notice, the Association will remove them. The Association will recover, where possible, the costs of removal from the resident or proprietor.

If tenants/residents wish to install a satellite dish to obtain channels from another country, they must obtain our permission in writing and in advance before a satellite dish can be installed within the communal area

- In granting permission the tenant/resident must agree to use the Association's approved contractor for installation.
- The tenant/resident must pay for the installation costs in full and in advance of the installation.
- The tenant/resident will be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the satellite dish and will have to pay any costs deemed appropriate by the Association.

5.0 ENFORCING CONDITIONS OF TENANCY AND/OR TAKING LEGAL ACTION

- 5.1** The Association's general approach to dealing with breaches of conditions of tenancy will be as follows:

Contact will be made with the affected residents and, where appropriate, their neighbours to clarify the issues, and explain the tenants' responsibilities. The objective at this stage will be to reach mutual agreement between those concerned on the action which should be taken. However, if mediation is inappropriate or ineffective, enforcing conditions of tenancy may involve contact with other agencies. Agreements on action will be confirmed in writing to the individual(s) concerned.

If there is persistent or serious breach of the conditions of tenancy the Association will consider legal action. These cases must be approved by the Housing Manager/Director and the action may involve:

- Action for damages, for example in cases of damage to property;

- Action for specific implement or Interdict;
- Anti-Social Behaviour Order, where the behaviour is defined as Anti-Social Behaviour;
- Eviction. This will only be used in the most extreme circumstances and where the breach of tenancy is very serious. This must be done on approval by the Housing Manager/Director

6.0 STAFF TRAINING

- 6.1 The Housing Manager will ensure that all staff has the appropriate training and knowledge to perform their job effectively and to carry out the key aims and objectives of the Estate Management Policy. We will achieve this by employing staff with relevant qualifications and/or experience and through encouraging the take-up of suitable training opportunities.

7.0 COMPLAINTS

- 7.1 Anyone who feels aggrieved by the service they have received from staff in carrying out their responsibilities in relation to this policy and its associated procedures can make an informal or formal complaint to the Association.
- 7.2 All complaints will be fully investigated in accordance with the Association's Complaints Procedure. A written guide on the complaints process is readily available to customers on request and is on display in the reception area of the office.
- 7.3 Any tenant making a complaint will be advised of their right to complain to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

8.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 8.1 The Association will seek to ensure that in implementing this policy and its associated procedures, no group, organisation or individual will receive less favourable treatment or be discriminated against regardless of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or other grounds.
- 8.2 On request the Association will provide translations of all our documents, policies and procedures in various languages and other formats large print, Braille etc. and these can be obtained by contacting the Association's offices.

9.0 POLICY REPORTING

9.1 We will report on the achievement of service objectives described in this policy to the Operations Sub-Committee on a regular basis. This will include such items as

- Checking that the service is effective;
- Seeking tenants' views on the service;
- Reviewing policies, practices and performance at regular intervals.

10.0 POLICY REVIEW

9.1 This policy will be reviewed in January 2021

Fiona Mills
Housing Manager