



## **Estate Management Policy**

**Policy Ref: HMP04**

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<b>Date of Review</b>	January 2019
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	January 2022
<b>Reviewed By</b>	Board

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. We will provide an estate management service which helps keep common areas in and around the buildings we own and factor clean, well maintained and attractive. We will encourage tenants and residents to take responsibility for their home and the environment in which they live, as well as being responsible for the behaviour of their family and friends and other visitors to their home. We will ensure that all new and any vulnerable tenants are aware of these responsibilities, providing appropriate support and guidance where applicable.
- 1.2. The Operations Director has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Estate Management Policy with the Housing Services Manager and Factoring Manager being responsible for key aspects of the procedural delivery on a day to day basis with delegation of specific tasks to appropriate staff.
- 1.3. We will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and estate management outcomes via a number of Key Performance Indicators (see **Annex 1**). These will be routinely reviewed and analysed to establish examples of best practice and to make recommendations where changes are required.
  - A key aspect of our ongoing performance management in terms of estates will be to carry out quarterly Environmental Audits of all tenanted blocks and annual environmental audits of all buildings we provide a factor service to. The Environmental Audits evaluate the external front and rear of our buildings; the internal condition of our buildings and any local environmental issues or repairs. A full description of the Environmental Audit assessment is found within the Estate Management Procedures.

## 2. Policy Objectives

- 2.1. The Estate Management Policy aims to assist PHA in providing its tenants and all Partick residents with a safe, secure and pleasant living environment; where instances of unreasonable disturbance or inappropriate action is promptly tackled, thus ensuring tenants/residents can enjoy their home and surroundings.

Our objectives include:

- being efficient and proactive in fulfilling our legal obligations as a landlord and property factor;
- ensuring that tenants fulfill their legal obligations in relation to their tenancy agreement and as landlord we take reasonable steps to enforce these;
- ensuring that homeowners fulfill their obligations written in the Deed of Conditions for their building and as property factor we take reasonable steps to enforce these;
- being visible within our estates, carrying out frequent inspections and environmental audits in line with KPIs;
- focusing on prevention and early intervention where appropriate;
- developing a multi-agency approach to resolving issues that we cannot resolve independently;

- through effective partnership working and use of established protocols, making appropriate referrals to partner agencies and organisations where we encounter potentially vulnerable people who may need particular, advice, assistance or support;
- ensuring delivery of the physical quality, safety and aesthetic standard of our estates and neighbourhoods;
- ensuring that tenants are kept regularly up to date on the status of any complaints;
- ensuring that staff are sufficiently trained to deal with varying issues that arise;
- monitoring and reviewing area management issues and intervening as appropriate;
- demonstrating our commitment to taking a strategic approach to identifying and tackling estate issues and improving the wider environment of the area where we operate; and
- taking positive steps to inform, engage with and listen to tenants/residents about continuous improvements to our area management service.

### **3. Key Principles**

#### **3.1. PHA Responsibilities**

3.1.1. We will manage our estates to a high standard to ensure that residents can be proud of their local area and enjoy their living environment. We will take firm action against tenants whose behaviour damages the physical environment of our houses and the immediate surroundings.

3.1.2. We recognise that a comfortable environment is important to our tenants and we will work closely with all agencies that contribute towards a pleasant and comfortable environment, such as the Police and the Council. We will share information where appropriate and necessary with the Police and other agencies.

3.1.3. Our responsibilities are impacted upon whether or not we factor a building and by the level of authority we have to carry out work. In general the greater level of ownership we have, the easier it is for us to instruct works. We will ask affected homeowners about proposed changes to the area management service we provide.

3.1.4. Where we have majority ownership within a block or the majority of affected homeowners agree to a given action, we will carry out the implementation of these services regardless of whether or not other affected homeowners have agreed to this work going ahead. Homeowners will always be consulted via a mandate for any work taking place which is over the current value of £1,000.

3.1.5. If we are not the property factor or the majority of affected homeowners do not agree to work going ahead, we will do whatever we reasonably can to

get the homeowners and other property factors to uphold their responsibilities to maintain the building in a good condition.

3.1.6. Our Housing Assistants will carry out an annual environmental audit programme to ensure our estates are maintained to the required standard. The frequency of these inspections will be on a rolling 6-monthly basis. Any inspection which highlights an issue or there being a need for further action (e.g. poor garden, common close condition, back courts and bin store condition etc.) will be recorded within our Housing Management system. Appropriate action to resolve the issue will then be undertaken within a reasonable and realistic timeframe, this will depend on the nature of the issue (please refer to Estate Management Procedures). It will be the responsibility of the Housing Officer to ensure action within their patch is initiated, progress is monitored, and follow-up action (e.g. direct contact with tenant via house visit and leaving calling card if unsuccessful, writing to tenants regarding failure to keep common areas clean and tidy, etc.) is carried out. Other agencies (e.g. the Council, etc.) should be made aware and referred to as appropriate.

3.1.7. Maintenance Officers will programme routine inspections of our estate assets beyond the curtilage of tenant properties, for example the condition of our building fabric, soft and hard landscaping, common areas and general estate environment. As required, our Maintenance Officers will also address response repair and cyclical maintenance issues relating to individual properties as and when discovered.

3.1.8. As stated, it is the responsibility of the Operations Director to ensure the implementation of the Estate Management Policy, there are however a number of issues which will arise within an estate that are out with the direct control of PHA (e.g. street cleaning, lighting, litter, abandoned cars etc.) When these incidents are reported to PHA staff; the individual making the report will be advised of the appropriate service to which their issue should be reported. It is good practice to offer support and assistance to the person making the report in terms of the notification process and/or to liaise with the appropriate agencies responsible (e.g. Police, the Council, etc).

## **3.2. Tenant Responsibilities**

3.2.1. Section 2, 3 and 5 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement stipulates tenant responsibilities in terms of the use of their house and common parts; respect for others living within the estate and their obligation/s in relation to repairs, maintenance, improvements and alterations. We will take prompt action against tenants who breach their tenancy agreement. This action will initially be a warning letter or an interview with the tenant to discuss the issues. In the event of the tenant continuing to breach the agreement, the action will become more serious and may lead to legal action such as an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or a Notice of Proceedings that could ultimately lead to eviction (our Estate Management Procedures contain fuller details of these responsibilities). In situations where a tenant/s is not adhering to their area management obligations, we will actively engage with the Police, the Council and other agencies to assist us in tackling area management issues.

3.2.2. We will work closely with all new tenants to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities under their tenancy agreement and how they should comply with them.

3.2.3. We will provide our new tenants with advice and assistance when they sign up for their new home. This will include advice on all statutory rights that they have, such as the Right to Repair and the Right to Compensation for Improvements. We will give advice on all aspects of area management and their specific responsibilities as stated within Section 2, 3 and 5 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

3.2.4. We will seek to carry out new tenancy visits to all new tenants within 8 weeks of their tenancy start date (see **Annex 1**). During the visit we will ensure that the tenant is made fully aware of their area management responsibilities under their tenancy agreement.

3.2.5. We will work closely with all known vulnerable new tenants and vulnerable existing tenants to ensure that they receive the necessary support to assist them in complying with the area management conditions of their tenancy agreement.

### **3.3. Homeowner Responsibilities**

3.3.1. Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the deed of conditions give full details of homeowner responsibilities in relation to area management. This includes what homeowners can and cannot do and what they must request permission for. Environmental audits within our factored blocks will be carried out annually.

### **3.4. Abandoned Properties**

3.4.1. It is a condition of tenancy that the tenant (and each joint tenant) must live in the accommodation as their only (or principal) home and give notice if they plan to move. If we have grounds to believe a tenant/s has abandoned their property, we will commence the abandonment process which may result in the repossession of the tenant/s home.

3.4.2. PHA has a robust process in place for tackling the issue of abandoned properties (please refer to Estate Management Procedures for specific details). Key concerns relating to abandoned properties include:

- abandoned properties can cause estate management problems and nuisance, such as failure to maintain private or common areas which in turn can lead to a decline in the estate's appeal;
- abandoned properties can result in a loss of income to PHA via rent loss accruing; and
- abandoned properties can prevent us from making the best use of our stock to meet housing needs.

3.4.3. Housing Officers will play a central role in addressing abandoned properties. Their duties in identifying potentially abandoned property and intervening as appropriate are set out within the Estate Management Procedures. Through a process of tenancy settling in visits, regular tenancy sustainment inspections and environmental audits, PHA will be vigilant for properties that appear to be unoccupied and initiate appropriate procedures promptly. On occasions where it is unclear whether or not a property is occupied, PHA will take the position of commencing action in order to ensure the Association and its assets are protected

#### **4. Performance Measurement, Reporting and Continuous Improvement**

- 4.1. We will review performance and track the impact of our approach to area management in the following ways:
- Recording, analysing and monitoring our output KPI performance;
  - Recording, analysing and learning from complaints, queries and disputes relating to area management;
  - Developing and establishing benchmarking tools in order to compare our performance against other social landlords through the Scottish Quality Network; and
  - Working in partnership with tenants, residents and other local level organisations to provide safe and attractive communal spaces throughout our area of operation.
- 4.2. The Board will receive details of customer satisfaction and key performance information. Concerns about our services will be reported to the Board as required, together with an action plan identifying measures we have put in place to improve the quality of the service.
- 4.3. We will report details of our area management performance to our customers each year through the Annual Return on the Charter and Annual Report. We will also publish information in our newsletters and via our website.

#### **5. Complaints about our Service**

- 5.1 Anyone can complain if they feel we did not meet our service standards. The complaints process is outlined in our Comments, Compliments & Complaints Policy which can be downloaded from our website at [www.partickha.org.uk](http://www.partickha.org.uk)

#### **6 Equalities**

- 6.1 PHA recognises that all tenants/residents should be treated equally and fairly and should not be discriminated against in respect to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

## **7 Data Protection and Confidentiality**

- 7.1** We will view all estate management complaints confidentially and impartially. Complaints should generally be made in writing, but there may be circumstances where it is appropriate for us to respond to verbal complaints.
- 7.2** PHA recognises the importance of safeguarding personal privacy when dealing with tenants and other customers. This policy complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in all respects.
- 7.3** PHA will treat all estate management complaints in a confidential manner. Where data sharing is required, e.g. with Police, protocols will be in place with the external agencies that we work with.

## **8 Alternative Formats**

- 8.1** On request, the Association will provide translations of all documents, policies and procedures in various languages and other formats such as CD, large print, Braille etc. These can be obtained by contacting the Association's offices.

## **9 Policy Review**

- 9.1** The policy will be subject to a full review on a three-yearly basis. However it will be amended as necessary to reflect relevant changes in legislation, guidance and/or recognised good practice.

### Estate Management Policy

Key Performance Indicators	Target
Percentage of new PHA tenancy settling in visits completed within 8 weeks of tenancy start date	100%
Percentage of PHA tenants satisfied with the management of their estate	≥ 98%
Number of abandoned PHA properties annually	≤ 4
Overall satisfaction with PWL property factoring service	≥ 92%
Number of complaints received by PHA specific to estate management issues annually	≤ 15
Complete full PHA stock profile environmental audit	annually
Complete environmental audit of all PWL factored buildings	annually