



ENVIRONMENTAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

OVERALL PURPOSE

Estate Management is a term used to describe a wide range of services relating to the management of housing estate areas. Any matter, which can impact upon a customer's quiet enjoyment of their home or the environment in which they live, may be described as an Estate Management issue. West North West homes are responsible for managing these estates and dealing with:

- Fly Tipping , litter and Graffiti
- Grounds Maintenance issues
- Tree Management
- Communal areas including garages and parking
- Estate Walkabouts and Inspections
- Building cleaning and window cleaning.

INTRODUCTION

- West North West homes Leeds seeks to ensure that the Policy does not discriminate against customers on any grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability/illness or age.
- WHWHL will ensure the promotion of equal opportunities by making the publication of information and documentation available in different languages and other formats such as large print, tape and Braille as required.
- West North West homes Leeds has developed its own Environmental Estate Management Procedures which will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- West North West homes will ensure customer care is delivered at all times and that services provided are of the highest quality and offer value for money demonstrating our commitment to all our customers.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. We will measure your satisfaction with the estate management and environmental services twice a year.
2. We will aim to ensure our estates achieve the top grade and publicise how your estates are graded in the customer newsletter and on the website
3. We will cut our verges and communal grassed areas minimum of once a month in the cutting season when weather permits.
4. We will clean communal areas in flats and maisonettes a minimum of once a week.
5. We will unblock rubbish chutes within 1 working day of them being reported.
6. We will clean communal windows once a year in multi-storey flats, every 3 months in sheltered schemes and every 6 months in low rise flats and maisonettes.
7. Our dedicated team will remove all racist, sexist, obscene and offensive graffiti within 1 working day and any other graffiti within 4 working days.
8. We will remove fly tipping within 1 working day of it being reported.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

We will monitor the delivery of services within this Policy through:

- Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE 6) Estate and Tenancy Management.
- Environmental Improvement Plan
- Performance against our agreed Service Standards
- We will report our performance bi-monthly on a range of Service Standards and agreed local performance indicators which include:-
 - The number of estate inspections/walkabouts undertaken and the outcomes
 - The removal of Fly tipping within one working day of it being reported
 - The removal of all racist, sexist, obscene and offensive graffiti within one working day.
 - Removal of all other graffiti within four working days.
 - Cutting of communal grass a minimum of once a month in the cutting season.
 - Cleaning of communal areas a minimum of once a week.

ENVIRONMENTAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.0 Statement of Intent

1.1 The overall aim of the West North West Homes Leeds (WNWHL) Estate Management Policy is to provide:-

- High profile estate management services to our customers and tenants deliver excellence and provide clean, safe and enjoyable places in which to live.

1.2 The specific objectives of the Estate Management Policy are: -

- To develop a systematic approach to the management of our properties and estates.
- To monitor estates and neighbourhoods through Estate Walkabouts and Inspections.
- To manage the environment around our properties and communal areas
- To effectively provide clean, safe and well lit internal and external spaces where possible.
- To ensure that all customers are aware of their respective responsibilities in terms of their own and surrounding environment;
- To set appropriate estate management service standards to measure performance, delivery and customer satisfaction and to involve the customer in deciding these standards.

1.3 The Principals Underpinning the Policy:

- WNWHL will work in an inclusive way to enable the implementation of this Policy. This will include involving tenants, leaseholders, homeowners, other Council services, the Police, statutory and voluntary agencies;
- WNWHL will implement detailed procedures and agreed practices uniformly across the service;
- WNWHL will ensure that the Estate Management Policy complies with and reflects good practice;

1.4 We will manage our environmental responsibilities:-

- By reducing our volume of waste to landfill, and increasing the level of recycling in both residential areas and within our business at an operational level wherever practical.
- By minimising waste arising from our operations and to implement sound waste management practices.
- By reducing the consumption of all materials and wherever practicable to actively encourage and enforce recycling and re-use.

Item 4.7 Appendix 1

- By reducing CO2 emissions of our vehicle fleet by providing appropriate driver training programmes and investigating other methods of vehicle management.
- Consider the need to implement environmental enforcement action where appropriate.

2.0 Outline of Service

2.1 This policy sets out the principles that West North West Homes will follow in the management of our estate environment and the specific issues and services are covered are:-

- Tree management including planting
- Estate caretaking and graffiti removal
- External communal areas
- Building cleaning and window cleaning
- Individual gardens and tenanted properties
- Management of garages and plots
- Household refuse, litter and recycling
- Infestation of vermin/insects
- Estate walkabouts/inspections.

2.2 Tree Management

2.2.1 West North West homes will proactively monitor the condition of trees on our estates through regular estate inspections in order to identify trees in need of maintenance at an early stage.

2.2.2 A 24 hour emergency service will be offered where trees have the potential to cause damage, if maintenance work is not undertaken quickly. Tree maintenance may be related to the risk trees may pose to houses, customers and or highways. Examples of tree maintenance techniques that WNWHL contractors use include regular inspections, pruning, tree removal and pollarding (removing a large number of branches).

2.2.3 In other non-priority cases, tree maintenance will be considered following an inspection by an approved contractor and in accordance with sound arboriculture practice.

2.2.4 Where only minor works are required, eg, the removal of epicormic growth, such works may be undertaken by trained operatives working in West North West Homes Environmental Services Team.

2.2.5 When necessary, West North West Homes will seek the advice of Leeds City Council's Planning Department in regard to trees that may be subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

And trees will also not be removed for the following reasons:-

- To reduce leaf fall and sap production
- To reduce activities of birds or invertebrates

- To change natural light levels

2.2.6 West North West Homes will also undertake tree planting to suitable sites when this is in the interests of the environment and in consultation with our customers.

3.0 Estate Caretaking and Graffiti Removal

3.1 West North West homes will provide a proactive Environmental Estate Caretaking Service, whose duties will include:-

- Removal of Graffiti and Fly Tipping
- Garden Clearance (void properties and vulnerable/disable residents)
- Hedge Cutting
- Small Scale tree works
- Tidying of overgrown areas.

3.2 The Environmental Estate Caretaking Service will monitor 'hot spots' identified by customers, Officers, or the team's themselves by regularly visiting these sites on the estates, if sites become a persistent problem then the team will report this area to the team leader who will work closely with the Tenancy Enforcement Team, LCC Enforcement Team, Community Wardens, Neighbourhood Management Officer, and the Police or other agencies where required.

3.3 The Environmental Services Team will be responsible for the monitoring and Management of the Environmental Estate Caretaking Service. This will include:-

- Monitoring of the team's performance against the Performance Indicators and Service Standards.
- Involvement in joint walkabouts with the housing office staff.
- Monitoring performance of contractors.

3.4 Our customers' views are fundamental to our policy. We will engage in customer research, asking for feedback on standards and performance, and will utilise this information to develop improvements in service.

4.0 External Communal Areas

4.1 General communal areas will be monitored by the Neighbourhood Management officers, Neighbourhood Wardens, Environmental Services Team and other officers undertaking inspections of estates. Specific areas to be monitored involve grounds maintenance (grass and shrubs), weed spraying, and building cleaning. Such areas will be monitored in accordance with West North West Homes Service Standards.

4.2 Grounds Maintenance will be carried out on communal grassed land under the management of West North West Homes Leeds, in accordance with the Service Standards and contract specification.

4.3 Weed spraying will be undertaken by the nominated contractor, on roads, paths, ginnels and other paved areas where specified within the contract.

4.4 West North West Homes Leeds will work in partnership with Leeds City Council, other agencies and the Police, to resolve environmental issues where enforcement action may be required.

4.5 West North West Homes Leeds will also work proactively with residents and in partnership with Groundwork Leeds, to identify specific projects that could result in environmental conditions being improved for the benefit of local communities.

5.0 Building Cleaning and Window Cleaning

5.1 West North West Homes Leeds will undertake the cleaning of communal areas to those buildings included in the present Service Level Agreement, between the ALMO and our service provider. These buildings include all multi storey flats and maisonettes and some low rise dwellings.

5.2 Other multi-storey buildings not presently included in the Service Level Agreement will be cleaned by West North West Homes Leeds, in-house Multi-storey Caretaking Team, either through the provision of Residential Caretakers, or Mobile Teams.

5.3 The Caretaking Team and Cleaning Service provider will undertake daily health and safety checks of all internal and external communal areas, to identify repair issues and the removal of hazards, eg, litter and rubbish.

5.4 The cleaning of communal windows to multi-storey blocks and other low rise dwellings, including sheltered complexes and maisonettes will be undertaken in accordance with the contract specification on either a quarterly, six monthly or annual basis.

6.0 Individual Gardens and Tenanted Properties

6.1 West North West Homes Leeds will ensure that tenants maintain their gardens, in accordance with the condition of the Tenancy Agreement.

6.2 In cases of a breach of these conditions, where the condition of the garden has become unacceptable, West North West Homes Leeds will discuss the issue with the tenant and may in exceptional cases, undertake gardening work on the grounds of disability or vulnerability. In other cases, enforcement action will be considered if the tenant fails to improve the condition of the garden within an agreed timescale.

6.3 West North West Homes Leeds will also consider applications for the erection of gardens sheds, scooter sheds, garages or pigeon lofts, within the garden of tenanted properties or on ALMO managed garage sites. Enforcement action may be taken if structures are erected before formal permission has been granted.

7.0 Management of Garages and Parking

7.1 West North West Homes Leeds will monitor the condition of our garage sites to ensure that these are adequately maintained, and are utilised by tenants in

accordance with the Tenancy Agreement. Enforcement action will be taken if breaches of the agreement occur.

- 7.2 West North West Homes Leeds will also monitor the condition of tenants' gardens and other communal parking areas, to ensure that vehicles are only parked on driveways, hardstanding or designated parking bays. Permission for the parking of motor homes or caravans will also be required by any tenant wishing to park such a vehicle, within the boundary of the property, or on an adjacent parking bay.

8.0 Household Refuse/Litter and Recycling

- 8.1 West North West Homes Leeds will work closely with Leeds City Council's Street Scene Services, Highways and customers, to deal with problems arising from refuse collection, street cleaning and litter picking in order to keep estates clean and tidy.
- 8.2 West North West Homes Leeds will consult with our tenants to ensure that refuse and recyclable material is disposed of safely, tidily and in the correct refuse containers or bin bag supplied by Leeds City Council, and put out on the correct day for collection.
- 8.3 West North West Homes Leeds will take enforcement action where tenants unreasonably allow rubbish to accumulate in their gardens or communal areas.
- 8.4 West North West Homes Leeds will work closely with Leeds City Council and customers to provide local recycling facilities where ever possible.

9.0 Infestations of Vermin/insects

- 9.1 West North West Homes Leeds will refer any report of an infestation of rats to the Pest Control Section of Leeds City Council's Environmental Action Service, who will provide a free service and ensure that any treatments are undertaken quickly and effectively.
- 9.2 West North West Homes Leeds will also arrange for the treatment of infestations of insects and mice to communal areas. However, tenants will be held responsible for infestations that occur within individual tenanted properties.

10.0 Estate Walkabout and Inspections

- 10.1 West North West Homes Leeds Neighbourhood Management Officers will undertake monthly inspections of our estates, and also six monthly estate walkabouts, to identify environmental issues and to monitor the condition of our estates.
- 10.2 West North West Homes Leeds will invite our customers to the twice yearly walkabouts, which will be publicised and will enable West North West Homes to maximise the opportunities for feedback regarding the ALMO's management of our estates.

- 10.3 Where specific issues are identified, these will be referred to West North West Homes Leeds Environmental Estate Caretaking Team, or other contractor for appropriate action. Such action will be undertaken in accordance with agreed Service Standards.

3.0 Specific Needs

- 3.1 West North West Homes Leeds will take into account any specific needs which may arise of older and vulnerable people, and black and minority ethnic groups, in a manner that promotes equality and inclusiveness ensuring all customers are treated equally and fairly, taking into account race, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and religious belief.

4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 West North West homes Leeds will seek the views of customers on this policy at least annually in a variety of different ways through our Customer Involvement mechanisms.

5.0 Implementation

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of all West North West Homes Leeds' Managers and staff to ensure that their work is carried out in line with this policy and procedures relating to it.
- 5.2 Members of the Board of West North West homes Leeds, the Chief Executive and Heads of Services are responsible for the development of this policy and ensuring that the policy is implemented and monitored effectively.
- 5.3 All our staff will be trained at induction, and at regular intervals, to ensure they are aware of the requirements of this policy.

6.0 Monitoring

- 6.1 Our customers' views are fundamental to our policy. We will engage in customer research, and seek feedback on standards and costs. Through this approach, we will develop our services to achieve continuous improvement and Value for Money.
- 6.2 West North West homes Leeds will monitor the effectiveness of its policy by reviewing our performance against Services Standards, Local Performance Indicators and Audit Commission KLOE 6. We will also review our performance annually by assessing customer satisfaction with our services through a comprehensive Satisfaction Surveys. .
- 6.3 West North West homes Leeds will publish the results of this monitoring and use the results to identify, and act on, areas for improvement.

7.0 Review

In preparation for delivering this policy during 2009 West North West homes Leeds has reviewed and taken into account new or emerging government legislation and government and council policies.

As a result, this policy now fully reflects, and is inclusive of the issues arising from those policies and legislation, and considers the impacts arising.

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed at least annually or whenever there are any relevant changes to legislation, good practice that would impact on this policy, and in the light of comments received from customers.
- 7.2 The Environmental Services Team will be responsible for ensuring that reviews of this policy are carried out.
- 7.3 We will undertake quality assurance measures by implementing a number of mystery shopping exercises through the use of our customer involvement mechanisms, including Tenant Inspectors.

8.0 Legislation, Strategies and Policies

8.1 New or emerging legislation and new policy for 2009 include:

- EU Batteries Directive
- Waste Controls (England and Wales) Regulations 2009
- Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations 2009
- Environmental Liability Directive
- Environmental permitting extension consultation

8.2 Legislation, strategies and policies with relevance to the Environmental Estate Management Policy:

- Anti Social Behaviour Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Customer Care Policy and Strategy
- Tenancy Management Policy
- Vulnerability Policy and Strategy
- 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Duty of Care) Regulations
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Empty Homes Strategy.

