



Estate Management Policy

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Charter Outcomes	Number(s)
The Customer/landlord relationship	1. Equalities 2. Communication 3. Participation
Housing quality and maintenance	
Neighbourhood and community	6. Estate Management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes
Access to housing and support	11. Tenancy Sustainment
Getting good value from rents and service charges	

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Department	Housing Management
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Notes:

Policy drawn up with reference to
 The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
 General Data Protection Regulations 2018
 The Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003
 The Crime and Disorder Act (Scotland) 1998
 Anti-social Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004

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ANGUS HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Statement of Intent

1.1 Estate Management is a general term used to include tenancy management and environmental management. Estate Management is a vital part of the role of the landlord and viewed as an important service by tenants and other residents

1.2 The activity of Estate Management is not easy to define, however we would define it as –

“Property Management and Services which aim to give residents quiet enjoyment of their homes in a safe and secure environment which they can take pride in”.

Estate Management is not just about looking after buildings and communal areas. It is also about working with other agencies in the community and residents to achieve decent living conditions.

1.3 Estate management encompasses a wide range of activities including, providing clear advice to tenants about their responsibilities in relation to the use of the property and common parts; the management of communal areas and the physical environment in the Association's ownership.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 Estate Management is an activity which crosses a number of areas covered by other policies and is an activity which is not solely within our control. In many instances we have to work with other agencies such as the police, environmental health, social work and the community wardens to provide effective estate management.

2.2 We have identified the policy aims and objectives as:

- To promote conditions in which each resident can have quiet enjoyment of their home in a clean safe and tidy environment.
- To support tenants in adhering to the keys terms of the Tenancy Agreement and the upkeep of their property and surrounding area.
- To clearly define the respective responsibilities of the Association.
- To prevent breaches and deal with breaches of tenancy in a prompt, cost effective, innovative, responsive and effective manner.
- To promote multi-agency working and co-ordination with local services provided the local authorities
- To develop and encourage full participation by residents in the estate management of their area.
- Set targets against which the performance of staff and effectiveness of the service can be monitored.
- To monitor the quality of the service provided by our landscapers and cleaning contractors so that the service is efficient and represents value for money for residents.

2.3 To achieve the above objectives the Association will:

- Give clear information about tenant responsibilities at property viewings and as part of the sign up process.
- Provide good quality tenant handbook, newsletter articles and customer service standards.
- Ensure staff maintain a visible presence throughout the Association's housing developments.
- Ensure that staff act proactively and take appropriate and early action to enforce tenancy conditions where applicable.
- Carry out regular inspections of our housing developments.
- Closely monitor the performance of contractors in relation to the up keep of all common areas.

- Work closely with other agencies and statutory bodies with the aim of ensuring that the Association's housing developments and surrounding environment are well looked after.
- Encourage tenants to contribute to estate management by participating in joint estate inspections
- Encourage feedback on services and publish findings from surveys and visits.

2.3 Estate Management also involves:

- Providing advice and assistance on tenancy matters to help residents maintain their tenancies and the environment to the best of their abilities.
- Enforcing tenancy conditions where appropriate.
- Monitoring empty properties, gardens and surrounding areas so that our developments remain attractive and secure.
- Providing advice and assistance to residents including signposting them to services which enhance the local community such as initiatives to reduce crime, community projects and environmental improvements.

2.4 This policy is supported by detailed procedures outlining our day to day practice which will enable us to meet the aims and objectives of the policy. We aim to be consistent but we also aim to be flexible and proactive, meeting local needs and expectations when providing an estate management service.

3.0 **Legislation & Regulatory Framework**

The Estate Management Policy meets with legislative and good practice requirements including:

3.1 Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

This Act covers the statutory framework for Scottish Secure and Short Scottish Secure Tenancies and tenant consultation requirements

3.2 The Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST)

The SST sets out the rights and obligations of both tenants and landlords in relation to the use of the property and common parts. It is a legally binding document and by signing the SST at the beginning of a tenancy both parties agree to adhere to its conditions. This policy reinforces the obligations set down in the SST.

3.3 The Social Housing Charter

The Scottish Government, through the Social Housing Charter, sets the outcomes it expects social landlords achieve for their tenants. The Scottish Housing Regulator monitors landlords' performance against the Charter and lays an obligation on landlords to provide the relevant Charter standards and in relation to this policy are:

- Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that tenants live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.
- Tenants find it easy to communicate with their landlord and to get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions, and the service it provides.

4. **Estate Inspections**

4.1 All of the Association's staff have a duty in the course of their day to day work to pick up any repairs issues and estate management problems and report them to the Asset Management or the Housing Management departments depending upon the nature of the problem. Responsibility for the condition of our developments is shared between Housing Management and Asset Management.

The Association has a Caretaker based at Ormiston Crescent, Dundee, the Caretaker is responsible for cleaning and monitoring the estate on a regular basis, reporting repairs and feeding back issues such as anti-social behaviour and vandalism to housing or maintenance teams. In addition to this, inspections will normally be carried out by housing or maintenance staff to look at the broader environment.

- 4.2 The Maintenance and Housing Officers will carry out joint 6 monthly development inspections. During inspections the Maintenance and Housing Officers will arrange for any communal repairs which arise from these visits to be carried out. Where there are specific problems in developments which require more resources, inspections will be carried out more frequently as required. Where appropriate residents will be given the opportunity to participate in the inspections.
- 4.3 Repairs required to common areas, fences, buildings and walls will be dealt with in line with our maintenance policies and procedures.
- 4.4 Any complaints or enquires received by the Caretaker will be call logged and passed to the relevant member of staff to investigate. The member of staff will respond to these complaints by contacting the complainant either personally or by telephone within 3 working days.
- 4.5 Each year the Association sets an Environmental Improvement Budget. The budget is divided equally between the five Maintenance and Housing Officer's areas and can be used by staff to carryout improvements and repairs on the Association's estates.

5. Cleaning of Common Areas

- 5.1 The Association has contracted a cleaning service in various estates for the weekly/fortnightly/Monthly cleaning of communal stairs and corridors in some developments with flats to ensure that these meet an acceptable standard.

Residents are expected to make their own arrangements in conjunction with their neighbours to take turns cleaning the common areas within the tenement. The Housing Management staff will monitor the standard of cleanliness and make sure the tenants adhere to their tenancy conditions by:

- Carrying out regular inspections
- Responding to complaints regarding the performance of individual tenants

5.2 A close cleaning service may be offered where the residents unanimously agree to the service and, in certain circumstances, imposed where standards are unacceptably low and recharged as appropriate.

The Association has developed a detailed technical specification for properties with a cleaning service. Which is available on request and will be implemented for all stair cleaning contracts.

6. Common Landscaping

6.1 We have employed a gardening contractor who is responsible for maintaining common landscaping within our developments to ensure they meet an acceptable standard. Although landscaping will vary in each development the following general standards will be maintained:

Communal grass will be cut and cuttings removed on a fortnightly basis up to sixteen times per year.

- Shrubs and bushes will be pruned twice a year.
- Shrub beds will be weeded and the earth grubbed six times per year.
- There will be a litter pick on each occasion the contractor is in the development carrying out landscape maintenance.
- Weed killing will be carried out once a year.
- Ad hoc work such as tree maintenance will be carried out as required.

- The contractor will report any vandalism, damage or the need to renew planting or fencing.
- The contractor will produce an annual tree report on the condition of the trees.
- The contractor will carry out monthly visits between April and October each year.

7. Housing Stock

7.1 We have a planned maintenance programme which ensures that the structural features of our houses are regularly surveyed and as a result, become part of a programme of works to keep them in good condition. We work with the police to ensure where possible our properties and the surrounding communal space meet "Secure by Design" standards.

7.2 Residents from time to time apply to make alterations and improvements to their homes. Where we give our permission we will require that any work carried out is to the highest standard and that it complies with current building and planning regulations.

8. Private Gardens

8.1 Many of our houses have their own gardens. During quarterly inspections all housing staff will share responsibility for monitoring the condition of private gardens and encouraging residents to maintain them properly.

8.2 Where a resident fails to maintain their garden to an acceptable standard they will be contacted by a member of the housing team and reminded of their obligation in their tenancy agreement to look after their garden. A reasonable time will be given to bring gardens up to an acceptable level. Where a resident fails to do so, we will enforce tenancy conditions to bring about an improvement, however this is not always an appropriate approach. Where residents have health problems and are unable to look after their garden, we will try to help them access any concessionary or voluntary schemes which are available.

9. Car Parks and Paved Areas

9.1 Communal areas also cover car parks and areas of hard landscaping which can be subject to estate management problems.

9.2 When our staff are in these areas they will normally investigate problems with site lighting, abandoned cars and the parking of caravans, boats and trailers without permission. The condition of footpaths will normally be examined to determine whether they are safe, stable and free from weed growth. They will also ensure that they identify problems such as bird roosting where it is damaging the environment.

10. Fire Safety

10.1 The Association will:

- Carry out regular inspections on all communal corridors to ensure access routes are clear and free from personal belongings
- Make sure tenants are aware of their responsibilities to dispose all household waste in refuse bins provided and to keep all bins within the bin stores provided

11. Pets

11.1 Tenants can request permissions for one dog or cat. The rules concerning the keeping of domestic pets are covered in our Pet Policy. However, housing staff will be aware when dealing with estate management issues that animals may be the subject of complaints and the cause of neighbour nuisance.

In the first instance where a pet is the subject of a complaint it will be dealt with as an Estate Management Complaint. However, if the complaint persist and relates to damage the Association may deal with

the complaint as part of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy or it may be more appropriate the tenancy conditions may be enforced as a means of addressing the problem. Other agencies such as the animal welfare agencies or the dog warden may be notified if this is appropriate.

12. Vermin and Pest Control

12.1 Where cases are reported to us of infestations of vermin or pests in tenants' homes our maintenance staff will arrange an appropriate response to deal with the problem in accordance with environmental health guidelines.

13. Bulk Refuse/Items of Furniture

13.1 All residents unless otherwise stated are responsible for the disposal of items of bulk refuse/furniture by arranging for uplift by the local authority or another contractor of their choice. The Association will arrange for the removal of items as soon as reasonably possible where they pose a health and safety risk to residents. The cost of removal will be recharged to the resident responsible where they can be identified.

14. Tenancy Matters

14.1 When a property is allocated Housing Management staff will go over a summary of the tenancy conditions with the tenant to help ensure that the incoming tenant has an understanding of both their rights and their obligations. Every tenant will also be given a copy of the tenant's handbook which explains this in a straight forward way. Sometimes tenants need additional support and advice to help them to keep to their tenancy conditions. Where Housing Management staff are aware that incoming tenants are vulnerable, especially where there is no support from other sources, they will carry out a visit approximately one month into the new tenancy to see how the new tenant has settled in. If necessary this will be extended informally if the tenant needs ad hoc advice and support. Alternatively they may be referred to an appropriate agency or source of support if more formalised support is required.

14.2 General advice and assistance in all aspects of the tenancy and maintenance matters is available from Housing and Maintenance staff.

15. Support

15.1 Our staff will develop professional relationships with agencies that offer support and care with the aim of helping our tenants with particular needs to sustain their tenancy.

16. Neighbour Disputes and Complaints

16.1 Our aims and objectives and the way in which our neighbour complaints are dealt with are covered in our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. Our staff appreciate the complexities of such problems and the sensitive handling which is required when these situations arise.

However, any complaint relating to bins, stairs, rubbish, parking and pets will be monitored through Estate Management Policy. However, were problems persist and culprits are identify this may be dealt with through our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

17. The Role of the Housing Management Department

17.1 The recording of complaints concerning estate management and the condition of developments is the responsibility of Customer Services Advisors and Housing Assistants. Subsequent investigation is the responsibility of the appropriate Housing Officers and Housing Assistants.

17.2 The Association will develop working procedures to accompany this policy.

18. The Role of the Asset Management Department

18.1 The Asset Management Department will primarily be responsible for the condition and technical inspection of developments and the ordering of appropriate maintenance and remedial works in order to support this aspect of the policy.

18.2 The Asset Management Department where required will develop appropriate working procedures to accompany this policy.

19. Complaints

19.1 Tenants who are unhappy with the way in which Estate Management complaints have been dealt with should, raise a complaint in accordance with the Association's Complaints Policy. The response times for responding to complaints are set out in our Complaints Policy and Procedure.

19.2 Customers who remain unhappy and have exhausted the Association's complainant's procedure can take their complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

20. Equal Opportunities Implications

20.1 The Association is committed to providing equality of opportunity to all persons or groups within its area of operations in every aspect of its activities. In operating this policy the Association will endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity for all at all times and in all circumstances. In line with this commitment to equal opportunities, this policy and any summary or information leaflet can be made available free of charge in a variety of formats including large print, translated into another language or on audio tape.

21. MONITORING

21.1 All Estate Management complaints will be recorded on the Association's housing software system when reported. Senior Staff will use the housing software system to monitor performance and provide reports.

21.2 Monitoring of Estate Management complaints will permit Angus Housing Association to measure the occurrence of Estate Management issues. Angus Housing Association will therefore monitor the following –

- Number of Estate Management complaints received quarterly broken down into Category.
- Number of legal actions taken including Notices of Proceedings served, Decrees, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders broken down into Category

21.3 We will monitor residents views on our Estate Management policy by :

- Taking account of views expressed in tenants and owners satisfaction surveys.
- Taking account of views expressed by Residents Associations
- Taking account of views expressed by the Tenants Forum

22. Policy Review

22.1 This policy will be reviewed on a 4 yearly basis from the date of implementation which will be the date the policy is approved by the Committee of Management or earlier if deemed appropriate.